CARLETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES
GEOG/ENST 2500A, FALL 2018

CLIMATE CHANGE: SOCIAL SCIENCE PERSPECTIVES

Instructor: Dr. Jamie Brownlee
Classroom: UC 282
Class Time: Monday 11:35-2:25pm
Office: Loeb B340
Office Hours: 1:30-2:30pm Wednesday (or by appointment)
Email: jamiebrownlee@cunet.carleton.ca
Phone Number: 613-899-2193
Pre-requisites: GEOG 1020 or ENST 1020, or second-year standing

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

There is an overwhelming consensus among climate scientists and others that climate change poses a serious – and potentially grave – threat to human beings, ecosystems and other species. This course will use a social science perspective to look at the issue of global climate change, including its history, root causes and consequences. Throughout the course, we will discuss how the climate crisis is integrally related to global capitalism, systems of power and inequality, and the structure of the modern corporation. We will consider the specific role of social processes and institutions – such as politics and governments, economic growth, globalization, the fossil fuel industry, consumer culture, the mass media, and the advertising and public relations industries – in shaping climate change debates and contributing to the crisis. We will also examine the efficacy of different responses and solutions to the problems associated with climate change, ranging from market reforms and ‘green capitalism’ to more radical social and economic transformations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Because this is a social science course, students will be encouraged to think critically about how social, economic and political arrangements underlie global climate change. How and why are dominant social institutions at the root of climate change and our current responses to it? What are the connections between social and economic inequality and the policy-making process? How do systems of power, culture and ideology impact and accelerate the climate change threat? More generally, this course will challenge students to identify and interrogate their beliefs and assumptions about the social world, and to identify opportunities for engagement with these issues beyond the boundaries of the classroom.
**COURSE TEXT AND READING MATERIALS**

- Klein, Naomi. 2014. *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. Toronto: Knopf.

  This book is available at Octopus Books, which is located at 116 Third Avenue.

  Please note that **all other assigned readings** will be available through cuLearn.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION**

1. **Critical Reaction Paper, Due October 15th**  
   15%

   This assignment involves writing a critical reaction paper responding to all of the readings from one week of classes between weeks 2 and 5 (i.e., choose one of the weeks from week 2 to week 5). The paper should be approximately 5 double-spaced pages; the only sources you should use are those assigned for the week. In the paper, briefly summarize the main arguments and themes of each of the readings for that week, and then compare and analyze the arguments within them. The point of the paper is to allow you to engage with a particular topic that interests you and to develop your critical reflection and analysis skills. The paper is due in class on October 15th.

2. **Midterm Exam, October 29th**  
   25%

   The midterm exam will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. It will cover material from both the assigned readings and the lectures (weeks 1 through 5). The exam will be held in class.

3. **Final Paper, Due December 7th**  
   30%

   Students will select their own paper topic, understanding that it must be relevant to the issues addressed in the course. While the paper can draw on some of the weekly readings, it must also reference additional academic sources. It should be approximately 12-15 double-spaced pages. Papers will be graded on the quality of your research and writing, strength of your analysis and arguments, and your ability to situate your arguments within existing debates. Students are encouraged to discuss paper ideas with me at any point during the term. Late papers will be penalized 5 percent per day. Additional information will be provided in class.

4. **Final Exam**  
   30%

   The final exam will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. The final exam is *not cumulative*. Therefore, it will cover material from both the assigned readings and the lectures in the second half of the course only (weeks 7 through 12). The final exam will be scheduled by the university in the exam period.
**GRADES**

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar (p. 45), the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>85-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>A -</td>
<td>80-84</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>B -</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>63-66</td>
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<td>C -</td>
<td>60-62</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>57-59</td>
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<td>D -</td>
<td>50-52</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Below 50</td>
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WDN = Withdrawn from the course

Final grades are subject to the Dean’s approval.

**ACADEMIC REGULATIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

University rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks, and most anything else you might need to know can be found on the university’s website, here:

http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/

**REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

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

**Pregnancy obligation**

Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](http://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

**Religious obligation**

Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](http://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC 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 your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. [carleton.ca PMC](http://carleton.ca/PMC)

**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 is 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: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

**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 must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: students.carleton.ca/course-outline

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM**

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the Carleton University Student Academic Integrity Policy (See http://www.carleton.ca/sasc/academic-integrity/).

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's work as your own and is a serious academic offence. For the details of what constitutes plagiarism, the potential penalties and the procedures refer to the section on Instructional Offences in the Undergraduate Calendar.

**What are the Penalties for Plagiarism?**

A student found to have plagiarized an assignment may be subject to one of several penalties including: expulsion; suspension from all studies at Carleton; suspension from full-time studies; and/or a reprimand; a refusal of permission to continue or to register in a specific degree program; academic probation; award of an FNS, Fail, or an ABS. The Policy is strictly enforced and is binding on all students.

**What are the Procedures?**

All allegations of plagiarism are reported to the faculty of Dean of FASS and Management. Documentation is prepared by instructors and/or departmental chairs. The Dean writes to the student and the University Ombudsperson about the alleged plagiarism. The Dean reviews the allegation. If it is not resolved at this level then it is referred to a tribunal appointed by the Senate.

**ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS**

Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): https://carleton.ca/csas/
Writing Services: https://carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/
Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS): http://carleton.ca/csas/group-support/pass/
COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK ONE – SEPTEMBER 10TH
INTRODUCTION AND ASSESSMENT OF THE EVIDENCE: WHAT DOES THE SCIENCE SAY?

READINGS


WEEK TWO – SEPTEMBER 17TH
HISTORICAL ROOTS OF THE ECOLOGICAL AND CLIMATE CRISIS

READINGS


WEEK THREE – SEPTEMBER 24TH
THE EXTERNALIZING MACHINE: CORPORATE PERSONHOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

READINGS


WEEK FOUR – OCTOBER 1ST
CAPITALISM VERSUS THE CLIMATE: EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF CAPITAL ACCUMULATION, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND GLOBALIZATION

READINGS


**October 8th – Thanksgiving, No Class**

*WEEK FIVE – October 15th*

**Our Renewable Energy Future: The Global Economic Crisis, Unburnable Carbon and the Fate of the Public Sphere**

**Readings**


• Klein, Naomi. 2014. “Public and Paid For: Overcoming the Ideological Blocks to the Next Economy” in *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. Toronto: Knopf. pp. 96-119.

• Klein, Naomi. 2014. “Planning and Banning: Slapping the Invisible Hand, Building a Movement” in *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. Toronto: Knopf. pp. 120-160.

**October 22nd – Fall Break, No Class**

*WEEK SIX – October 29th*

• **Midterm Exam**

*WEEK SEVEN – November 5th*

**Global Warming is Good For You: The Public Relations Industry and the Environmental Movement**

**Readings**


• Rampton, Sheldon and John Stauber. 2001. “Global Warming is Good for You” in *Trust Us, We’re Experts!*. New York: Centre for Media and Democracy. pp. 267-283.
WEEK EIGHT – NOVEMBER 12TH
CONFRONTING CONSUMPTION ON A WARMING PLANET: INEQUALITY, CONSUMER CULTURE AND CORPORATE ‘GREENWASH’

READINGS


WEEK NINE – NOVEMBER 19TH
FEDERAL ACTION ON THE CLIMATE FRONT: ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY FROM HARPER TO TRUDEAU

READINGS


WEEK TEN – NOVEMBER 26TH
THE TAR SANDS, PIPELINES AND CANADA’S ENERGY FUTURE

READINGS


WEEK ELEVEN – DECEMBER 3RD
UNDERSTANDING AND CONFRONTING CLIMATE CHANGE DENIAL

READINGS


WEEK TWELVE – DECEMBER 7TH (*PLEASE NOTE – THIS CLASS IS ON A FRIDAY*)
SOLUTIONS TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS: GREEN CAPITALISM OR SYSTEMS CHANGE?

**READINGS**

