

ENST 3500 – Climate Justice and Action

DRAFT Winter 2026 Course Syllabus

Department of Geography & Environmental Studies, Carleton University

“You have to act as if it were possible to radically transform the world. And you have to do it all the time.”

- **Angela Davis**

Instructor: Meera Karunanathan (she/her)

Office: B450 A Loeb

Office hours: by appointment

Lectures: Thursdays, 2:35 am – 5:25 pm

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Brightspace: <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/365415>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will explore how communities and movements organize to fight the climate crisis and build alternative futures. Using a variety of modalities (including class discussions, guest lectures, games and debates), we will study the pedagogical tools, creative actions and organizing strategies through which frontline communities and social movements tackle the systemic factors shaping the climate crisis and its uneven impacts. The course combines theory with hands-on learning opportunities designed to build capacities to understand climate change through an intersectional lens and to contribute to initiatives that address systemic injustices and challenge epistemic erasures within dominant narratives.

***This course has a playlist! Check it out at:**

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5Cjdl7VPDObW1lPrpXvlmu>

PREREQUISITES

Third-year standing or permission of the Department.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Engage critically with popular and academic constructions and contestations of climate change, climate justice and climate action;
- Acquire an intersectional knowledge and understanding of climate change, mitigation and adaptation;
- Strengthen research, strategic thinking and advocacy skills;
- Develop or further refine a personal climate justice ethic and;
- Discover ways to apply knowledge and engage directly in climate justice work.

FORMAT

The course meets in person on Thursdays for three hours. We will take a collaborative pedagogical approach that consists of interactive lectures, seminar discussions and practical assignments. As active learners, students are expected to attend class having read/reviewed course material in order to engage actively in discussions and other activities. There will be a strong emphasis on collective learning. You will take turns leading group discussions and work in small groups to apply your knowledge through practical or playful assignments. Attend class with an open mind and be prepared to step out of your comfort zone. I encourage you to use the Brightspace discussion board to interact with one another rather than reading the material in isolation. The teaching team will monitor the discussion board and may adjust lectures and course content according to the feedback you provide.

MATERIAL

There is no textbook for this course. All course material will be available via ARES on Brightspace unless indicated otherwise.

**Please note that course content may be modified at the discretion of the instructor. Please follow email and Brightspace updates.*

EVALUATION

Assignment	Weight	Description and due date
Contributions to the learning community	15%	Evaluation is based on attendance, contributions to class discussions and other visible efforts to support peers and contribute to the collective learning environment including participation in Brightspace discussion boards.
Your learning journey	5%	Share the story of your journey as a learner in 500 words. See details on Brightspace. <i>Due: Jan 14</i> (or before your second class for those who join the course late.) <i>*Assignment must be uploaded to Brightspace before class.</i>
Critical analysis assignment	15%	Select and critique a media article or policy according to assignment guidelines on Brightspace. <i>Due February 5</i>

		* Assignment must be uploaded to Brightspace before class.
Final Project proposal/story board	10%	Work individually or in pairs to create a storyboard for your final project. (See details on Brightspace) <i>Due: February 26</i> <i>*Assignment must be uploaded to Brightspace before class.</i>
Discussion lead	15%	We will begin each seminar with a lively, informal student-led discussion on the readings. Sign up for one discussion <i>no later than Jan 18.</i> (See links to sign-up sheet for fall term on Google doc via Brightspace.)
Graded class activities	15%	Each class will include activities that encourage active participation. Four class activities will be graded without prior notice. Your top three scores will count for 15% of your final grade. These exercises are designed to help you stay on top of your readings and reinforce your understanding of the material.
Final project	25%	Intersectional climate stories <i>Due: April 1</i>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Read (or watch/listen) before class
Theme and activities	
Jan 8	
Introduction and overview	
Community agreements	<p><u>Supplementary:</u></p> <p>A Community Agreement Resource from the BCcampus Anti- Racism Anti-Hate Working Group https://bccampus.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/AR-AH-Community-Agreement-MAR-17-letterhead-3.pdf</p> <p>Tuck, E. & Yang, K.W. (2012). Decolonization is Not a Metaphor. <i>Decolonization, Indigeneity, Education and Society</i>. Vol.1. No 1. pp. 1-40.</p>

	<p>https://clas.osu.edu/sites/clas.osu.edu/files/Tuck%20and%20Yang%202012%20Decolonization%20is%20not%20a%20metaphor.pdf</p>
<p>Jan 15 Critical climate justice praxis social movement convergences</p> <p>*Learning journeys due on Brightspace at the beginning of class.</p>	<p>Sultana, F. (2021). Critical climate justice praxis.</p> <p>Tramel, S. (2020). Convergence as political strategy: social justice movements, natural resources and climate change. In <i>Converging Social Justice Issues and Movements</i>.</p>
<p>Jan 22 Critical analysis of climate policy and media</p>	<p>Jones, R., Reid, P., & Macmillan, A. (2024). An Indigenous climate justice policy analysis tool. <i>Climate Policy</i>, 24(8), 1080–1095. https://doi.org/10.1080/14693062.2024.2362845</p> <p>Dreher, T., & Voyer, M. (2015). Climate refugees or migrants? Contesting media frames on climate justice in the Pacific. <i>Environmental Communication</i></p>
<p>Jan 29 Storytelling as praxis</p>	<p>Reinsborough, P., & Canning, D. (2017). <i>Re: Imagining Change: How to Use Story-Based Strategy to Win Campaigns, Build Movements, and Change the World Chapters 1& 2: p.11-41</i></p> <p>Solnit, Rebecca. (12, Jan 2023). The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/news/2023/jan/12/rebecca-solnit-climate-crisis-popular-imagination-why-we-need-new-stories</p>
<p>Feb 5 Mutual aid and solidarity</p> <p>*Critical analysis assignments due</p>	<p>Solnit, R. (2009). A Tale of Two Princes: The Halifax Explosion and After. In <i>A Paradise Built in Hell: The Extraordinary communities that Arise in Disaster</i> (pp. 73-97). Viking Press.</p> <p>Spade, D. (2020). Solidarity not charity: Mutual aid for mobilization and survival. <i>Social Text</i>, 38(1), 131–151. https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-7971139</p>

<p>Feb 12</p> <p>Indigenous climate action</p>	<p><i>The Red Deal: Indigenous Action to Save Our Earth</i> https://ecology.iww.org/PDF/RedDeal/Red-Deal-I-End-the-Occupation.pdf</p> <p>Indigenous Climate Action (2023). Decolonizing Climate Policy in Canada https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e8e4b5ae8628564ab4bc44c/t/6572ef1200810a3f9b708453/1722440188718/DCP+Phase+2+Part+1.pdf</p>
<p>Feb 19</p>	<p>READING WEEK (NO CLASS)</p>
<p>Feb 26</p> <p>Student-led</p> <p><i>*Final project proposals due</i></p>	<p>Details to follow</p>
<p>March 5</p> <p>Just transitions</p>	<p>Irina Velicu & Stefania Barca (2020) The Just Transition and its work of inequality, <i>Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy</i>, 16:1, 263-273, DOI: 10.1080/15487733.2020.1814585</p> <p>Perry, K. K. (2023). (Un)Just transitions and Black dispossession: The disposability of Caribbean ‘refugees’ and the political economy of climate justice. <i>Politics</i>, 43(2), 169-185. https://doi.org/10.1177/02633957211041441</p>
<p>March 12</p> <p>Divestment from fossil fuels</p>	<p>Healing the Land: Indigenous Perspectives on Divestment https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e8e4b5ae8628564ab4bc44c/t/6733e0b2c4c796405e978fe3/1731453128732/ICA+Healing+the+Land+-+Divestment+Report_FINAL+VERSION+%28COMPRESSE+D%29.pdf</p> <p>Webinar: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W2eMe3AVtXQ</p>
<p>March 19</p>	<p>Isla, Ana. (2009) Who Pays for the Kyoto Protocol? Selling Oxygen and Selling Sex in Costa Rica. In Salleh, A. (Ed.)</p>

<p>Feminist Anti-colonial Engagements with Land, Environment, & Climate (In)justices - I</p> <p><i>(This module has been co-created with Professors Richa Nagar at Smith College, and Sirisha Naidu at University of Missouri- Kansas City)</i></p>	<p><i>Eco-sufficiency and Global Justice: Women Write Political Ecology.</i> Pluto Press. https://www.academia.edu/23151616/Who_Pays_for_the_Kyoto_Protocol_Selling_Oxygen_and_Selling_Sex_in_Costa_Rica</p> <p>Naidu, S.C. (2015) Conservation as Economic Imperialism. In Immanuel Ness and Zak Cope (Eds), <i>The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism</i>. Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 976-982.</p> <p><u>Supplementary:</u></p> <p>Jason Moore and Raj Patel. 2018. How the Chicken Nugget became the True Symbol of Our Era <i>The Guardian</i></p>
<p>March 26</p> <p>Feminist Anti-colonial Engagements with Land, Environment, & Climate (In)justices – II</p> <p><i>(This module has been co-created with Professors Richa Nagar at Smith College, and Sirisha Naidu at University of Missouri- Kansas City)</i></p>	<p>Marilyn Waring, <i>Who's Counting? Sex, Lies, & Global Economics</i> 27:33-101.25</p> <p>Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network. <i>Violence on the Land, Violence on our Bodies.</i> (Chapters One & Four) http://landbodydefense.org/uploads/files/VLVBReportToolkit2016.pdf</p> <p><u>From Crisis to Justice (How do we win a Global Green Deal:</u> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvBMTzjRVNI</p> <p><u>Supplementary:</u> <u>Cochabamba People's Agreement: Annotated</u> https://daily.jstor.org/cochabamba-peoples-agreement-annotated/</p>
<p>April 1</p> <p>Course review and discussion of final projects</p> <p><i>Final projects due</i></p>	

COURSE POLICIES

Submission of written assignments and late penalties

Assignments must be submitted via Brightspace on the due date. I do not accept assignments submitted via email. Late assignments may be subject to a reduction of the overall mark at the rate of 5% for each calendar day past the due date. Students facing extenuating circumstances must schedule an appointment to discuss alternative arrangements for missed or late assignments.

Communications

Questions of a general nature seeking clarification on assignments or course content should be posted on Brightspace in the discussion forum titled “questions for the teaching team”. They will be reviewed regularly and answered within 24 hours from Monday to Friday. For urgent matters or questions of a personal nature, please email me using your Carleton email account, placing “ENST 3500 ” in the subject heading. Please note that I may not respond to emails over the weekend.

Finally, email is an acceptable medium for simple inquiries, but not for complex questions. If your question cannot be answered in a sentence or two, please schedule a meeting.

Grades

In accordance with the Carleton University Calendar, the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C + = 67-69	D+ = 56-59	F = Below 50
A = 85-89	B = 73 - 76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56	
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60 -62	D- = 50-52	

To be considered in good standing, students must receive a grade of D- . 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.

Drop date

Please consult the Carleton University Calendar for the last day in the term to withdraw from a course with full fee adjustment at: <https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>

Netiquette

All students are expected to adhere to Carleton University's Expectations of Student Behaviour Online while participating in Brightspace discussion boards. For more details see:

<https://carleton.ca/online/online-learning-resources/netiquette/>

If you have any questions or concerns about [online conduct](#), please contact the Manager of Student Conduct and Harm Reduction, Dillon Brady, at DillonBrady@cunet.carleton.ca.

You will find more information at:

- <https://carleton.ca/online/online-learning-resources/online-discussion-tips/>

Copyright of Course Content

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copyright protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s)."

INSTRUCTIONAL AND CONDUCT OFFENCES

Carleton University has clear and firm policies regarding instructional and conduct offences. Instructional offences include among other activities cheating, contravening examination regulations, plagiarism (see details below) and submitting similar work in two or more courses without prior permission. Further information about University regulations which define and regulate these offences can be found at:

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

Plagiarism

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*" This includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the

results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Using AI tools to generate content for assignments, and presenting it as one's own original work, as well as copying or paraphrasing the content produced by AI tools without proper citations or the instructor's consent, are both considered to be in violation of academic integrity.

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.

See Carleton's policy on academic integrity for more information:

<https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy-2021.pdf>

ACADEMIC ACCOMODATIONS

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, please review the [Student Guide to Academic Accommodation \(PDF, 2.1 MB\)](#)

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, please review the [Student Guide to Academic Accommodation \(PDF, 2.1 MB\)](#)

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. For more details, visit the [Paul Menton Centre website](#).

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 the [Equity and Inclusive Communities website](#).

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. For more details, see the [Senate Policy on Accommodation for Student Activities \(PDF, 25KB\)](#).

CAMPUS RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

For information about resources and services for students including counselling services, academic support and writing tutorial services please visit:

<https://carleton.ca/pmc/current-students/student-resources/>

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>

Services for Indigenous Students

The Centre for Indigenous Support and Community Engagement (CISCE), formerly known as the Centre for Indigenous Initiatives, supports First Nations (status and non-status), Inuit, and Métis students, staff, and faculty by providing culturally safe spaces for dialogue and learning. The Centre provides weekly, monthly and annual programming for students and also develops and delivers resources and training to educate the Carleton community about Indigenous histories, worldviews and perspectives. To learn more about the services offered, please visit <https://carleton.ca/indigenous/cisce/students/>. If you have any questions, you can email Indigenous@carleton.ca