

# PSCI 390: Climate Change Justice

<b>Class times:</b>	Whenever you feel like it
<b>Room:</b>	Somewhere with a door, I hope
<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Christopher Bennett
<b>Office hours:</b>	Wednesdays at 1PM
<b>Office location:</b>	Hagey Hall, Room 354 (but I'm not there, obviously)
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:christopher.bennett@uwaterloo.ca">christopher.bennett@uwaterloo.ca</a>

## How does this course work?

Each week, you will have 3 things:

- (1) A set of readings/material to review;
- (2) A set of 1-page 'handouts,' and
- (3) A set of recordings, one for each handout.

I am aiming for this course to be as simple as possible. Read, listen, write, discuss in office hours or online.

Office hours: every Wednesday at 1PM, I'll host an office hours to talk to anyone who wants to join about anything they want to discuss.

## Two quick things

I hope this course will be fun and rewarding!

- 1) I love teaching this course because this is the material that I think is most worth thinking about. I hope you'll enjoy it too.
- 2) I absolutely and completely guarantee that, with a bit of work on your part, you will finish this course as a better writer, more confident in your critical and analytical skills, and assured that you can, in fact, develop your own perspective on an issue.

## Course Description

Climate change challenges every dimension of contemporary politics. It stretches standard moral reasoning, makes a mockery of existing institutions, preys upon the worst human instincts, and -- barring unimaginable reversal-- will be the single most destructive product of collective human endeavors.

The argument of this course is that the relationship between humans and their physical context requires, to put it mildly, reconsideration and renewal. Because of the devastation that climate change will bring, the ideas that now determine how humans relate to the non-human world require replacement. In addition to arguing directly for that claim, I will defend it via demonstration, focusing weekly on different political topics, thinking through its elements that are toxic to the climate and thereby demonstrating the need for replacement. The presence of a problem does not imply, however, that a solution exists, a worrisome state of affairs that itself demands scrutiny.

## Intended Learning Outcomes

In this course, students will work on forming **successful habits** with respect to their course work, preparation for class, verbal contributions, and written materials.

The following course objectives outline the specific goals we will pursue in this class, given the general aims set out above. This course will help students learn:

1. to recognize and evaluate the significance of the key features of the climate change;
2. to connect climate change to different areas of politics;
3. to develop their own perspective on climate change;

4. to reason well about how humans relate to their surroundings.

## Contact Policy

Please always email me from your Waterloo University account and indicate your reason for emailing in the subject line (e.g. Assignment #3; Feedback participation; etc.), along with the course code. Best practice in writing emails also includes a greeting and a signature. While I am less fussy about this than many, you will encounter professors, bosses, etc., who will absolutely refuse to respond to emails that omit those. I recommend getting in the habit of writing emails in this way from the start.

~~To see me in person, it is best to come by during my office hours. I am also available to meet at other times by appointment.~~

## Assessment

See assessment options outline.

## Submission of Assessments

All assignments must be submitted through the LEARN platform. Assignments submitted on LEARN will be graded and returned to students through the online platform. Failing to submit your assignment via LEARN by the deadline (see below for late penalties) will result in a failing grade.

Assignments must be submitted in either .doc or docx format. Documents submitted as PDFs or through other programs, such as Pages, will receive a 5% penalty and no in-text comments.

Late assignments will be penalized as follows: 5% for the first day and 2% per day after that. I will not accept assignments that are more than 10 days late. Weekends count as two days.

Examples:

- 1 day late: -5%
- 2 days late: -7%
- 7 days late: -17%
- 10 days late: -25%
- 11 days late: submission refused

Please do get in touch with me as early as possible if you are having any issues completing an assignment, ideally before the deadline. I am very happy to help every student meet the deadlines wherever possible. That said, I stick to the rules as a matter of fairness.

## Academic Integrity

*Academic Integrity:* In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

*Discipline:* A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties,

students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71>.

*Grievance:* A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70>. In addition, consult <http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/student-grievances-faculty-arts-processes> for the Faculty of Arts' grievance processes.

*Appeals:* A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72>.

*Academic Integrity website (Arts):* [http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic\\_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)

*Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo):* <http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>

## Turnitin

Plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin in this course.

Note: students must be given a reasonable option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin. See <http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/integrity-waterloo-faculty/turnitin-waterloo> for more information.

## Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The AccessAbility Services (AS) Office, located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS Office at the beginning of each academic term.

If you need to request special accommodation, please communicate with me as soon as possible to ensure the proper arrangements are made with little disruption.

## Required Materials

All of the required readings are available on the class LEARN page.



# Weekly Schedule

Week	Topic	Readings	Recordings
Week 1	Introduction	None—please take the time to listening to the recording I’ve made. They explain course details and introduce some content (to keep things interesting).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome (and syllabus)</li> <li>2. Assessment schemes</li> <li>3. Assignment outline</li> <li>4. Research questions</li> <li>5. Rubric (very briefly)</li> <li>6. Some key concepts</li> <li>7. Where are we at with this whole climate change situation?</li> </ol>
Week 2	Basic concepts & comparing social and climate justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pages 3-15 from: Rawls, J., 1999. <i>A theory of justice: Revised edition</i>. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.</li> </ul> <p>If you want to read a bit on the ‘reasons’ content for the week, I’ve posted chapter 1 of: Parfit, D., 2011. <i>On what matters: volume one</i> (Vol. 1). Oxford University Press.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Week 2 outline</li> <li>2. Recap</li> <li>3. Falling rocks</li> <li>4. Some (trolley) problems</li> <li>5. The right thing for whom?</li> <li>6. What is climate justice?</li> <li>7. What is an argument?</li> </ol>
Week 3	Nature & and its value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter 2 from <i>The Dasgupta Review – Independent Review on the Economics of Biodiversity</i></li> </ul>	
Week 4	The Anthropocene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Final two chapters: Kolbert, E., 2014. <i>The sixth extinction: An unnatural history</i>. A&amp;C Black.</li> <li>- Zalasiewicz, J., Williams, M., Haywood, A. and Ellis, M., 2011. The Anthropocene: a new epoch of geological time?.</li> </ul> <p>Suggested, but not required (easy reads):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kunkel, B., 2017. The capitalocene. <i>London Review of Books</i>, 39(5), pp.22-28.</li> <li>- Brannen, P., 2019. The Anthropocene. <i>The Atlantic</i>, (online) Aug. 12.</li> </ul>	

<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Green New Deal/US announcements/ Chinese announcements/ Canadian announcements</b>	I'm leaving this week blank because Biden's administration is going to make some big announcements about climate policy. I'll analyze them in conjunction with other recent policy developments, such as ones from the Chinese government. I'll also discuss the carbon tax in Canada a little bit, since that's what we've got going for us.	
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Capitalism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chap. 1 from Albert O. Hirschman, <i>The Passions and the Interests: political arguments for capitalism before its triumph</i></li> </ul>	
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>The bare bones of politics of the international sphere</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Steven Bernstein &amp; Matthew Hoffman, "Climate politics, metaphors and the fractal carbon trap"</li> <li>- Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons" (<a href="https://science.sciencemag.org/content/162/3859/1243">https://science.sciencemag.org/content/162/3859/1243</a>)</li> <li>- Elinor Ostrom, James Walker, Roy Gardner, 1992. "Covenants with and without a Sword: Self-governance is possible" <i>American Political Science Review</i>, 86(2), 404-17</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Denial, social media, free speech, and client journalism</b>	<p>This week's readings, more than any other's, are liable to change because of the amount being written on this right now. When I find something hot of the presses that's great, I'll add it here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dunlap and McCright, "Organized climate change denial"</li> <li>- Stanley Cohen. <i>States of Denial</i>. Chapter 1.</li> </ul> <p>The subject of one of the videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lewandowsky, S., Oreskes, N., Risbey, J. S., Newell, B. R., &amp; Smithson, M. (2015). Seepage: Climate change denial and its effect on the scientific community. <i>Global Environmental Change</i>, 33, 1-13.</li> </ul> <p>Something I've written on the subject, which I consider entirely optional because assigning your own readings feels [redacted]:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bennett, Christopher. "Denial, deplatforming, and democracy: thinking about climate change in the age of social media"</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Individual Responsibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Max Weber, <i>Politics as a Vocation</i></li> <li>- Broome, J., 2018. Against Denialism. <i>The Monist</i>, 102(1), pp. 110-129.</li> </ul>	

<b>Week 10</b>	<b>The Future</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter 16 from: Parfit, D., 1984. Reasons and person. Oxford: Oxford University Press.</li> <li>- Fairbrother et al., “How Much Do People Value Future Generations? Climate Change, Trust, and Public Support for Future-Oriented Policies”</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Population</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arrhenius et al., “Does Climate Change Policy Depend Importantly on Population Ethics? Deflationary Responses to the Challenges of Population Ethics for Public Policy”</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>Final thoughts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No readings—take extra care with your last paper!</li> </ul>	