

Syllabus as of October 6, 2020

Politics of Climate Change

POLS 1435 Fall 2020 Brown University

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Office: Watson 303 Office Hours (*online*): After class (T, Th) and Wed 12:30-2:00

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Climate change is arguably the most important global challenge in the 21st century. It will reshape weather patterns, storms, sea levels, and agricultural output worldwide, mostly for the worse. Mitigating climate change will require massive economic transformations, affecting energy, transportation, and industrial sectors. What are the politics of that transformation? What are the political forces obstructing it? How can do social movements, institutions, and economic interests interact to shape the national and global response to climate change? This course offers answers and insights, primarily from the perspective of political science.

This course: (1) focuses on politics (not physical science), (2) is solution-centered (not ‘admiring the problem’), and (3) amplifies diverse voices. We will consider climate change from multiple perspectives – not just the mainstream American one, but also reading Australian indigenous, African-American, and Asian authors, as well as several from the Global South. We will consider the gendered impact of climate change. The point is to show how the environment affects different people in quite different ways, complicating the need for a collective response. In the end, however, students will be asked to analyze what *works* for meeting the climate challenge.

This course will be entirely online. It combines the lecture format with interactive class discussion, so students must be available for the class time slot (i.e., no class conflicts).

Students are expected to be ready for the class discussions based on the assigned readings. This means that the *readings must be done ahead of the class* for which they are assigned. Class participation is important: it makes the class more fun and interesting for everyone. Students are also expected to follow the news on climate issues, which we will discuss in class.

Attendance will not be taken. Students are treated as adults: if you can’t make a class, you don’t need to explain it. However, your participation grade reflects your attendance: if you aren’t around, you don’t contribute to the class.

This syllabus is subject to change. Read it anyway.

Learning Objectives:

This class will:

- explore the relationship between climate change, domestic politics, and global justice
- encourage students to become reflective consumers of information about climate change
- improve understanding of the causes and consequences of climate change

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

- present and analyze major arguments related to climate change
- discuss the social, political, and economic benefits and challenges

Grading and Requirements:

A. Final Paper: 35%. Students are asked to choose one of two types of papers: 1) a comparison of “Doers vs. Deniers,” or 2) a business plan for creating institutional change on climate. We’ll discuss the method in class. You will choose which option by 5pm, September 20. Timely completion of the draft paper is part of your final grade. The final paper should be no more than 16 pages, double-spaced.

B. Interim Writing for Final Paper: 20%. Regardless of which type of final paper you choose, you will be required to submit, twice, a 6-page (double-spaced) interim paper on a part of the project, to be discussed in class. The first interim paper is worth 15%, graded by the TA. The second is worth 5%. It will be peer-reviewed (by other students), and only checked for completeness by the TA. The deadline for the first is October 8; the second is due November 8.

C. Tests: 30%. Two 24-hour take-home tests. Open book. Test #1 is Tuesday Oct 20. Test #2 will occur Thursday Nov 19.

D. Class Participation: 15%. Being prepared to critically discuss each reading, each week, is the best way to get the most out of this course. Your ability to do so will also stimulate others to engage as well.

Course Time Allocation: Over 13 weeks, students will spend 3 hours per week in class (39 hours total), 7 hours per week doing course reading, weekly assignments, viewing documentaries, and other out-of-class work (91 hours total). In addition, there is a research paper and midterm test that require a minimum of 50 hours of work.

Grading Policy:

Once a grade has been assigned, the student can only appeal it by contacting the instructor *in writing*. In writing, the student should justify why s/he feels that the grade should be modified.

You are strongly urged to hand in work on time. Late assignments will incur the following penalties: a full letter grade drop after 24 hours, or an automatic zero after 48 hours. If you have a legitimate medical/personal reason for the lateness, an extension is possible, but I will need a doctor’s note or equivalent documentation.

Office Hours:

I will hold office hours over Zoom. You do not need an appointment; please don’t ask for one. It’s first come, first served. Two options:

1. Immediately after the finish of the lecture session on Tuesdays and Thursdays, I will stay on that Zoom channel and answer any questions you might have. If they are private, we can switch to my designed Office Hours meeting on Zoom.
2. Also, on Wednesday, I will log on at 12:30 to my Office Hours meeting on Zoom. I will allow students in, one at a time, from the Zoom Waiting Room. I’ll stay online until all

questions are answered; then I will logoff for the day. So come early if you want to talk; and if you can't make the beginning of my office hours, please email me to arrange a later time.

Required Texts:

1. Harvey, Hal, Robbie Orvis, and Jeffrey Rissman. 2018. *Designing Climate Solutions: A Policy Guide for Low-Carbon Energy*. Washington: Island Press.
2. Aronoff, Kate, Alyssa Battistoni, Daniel Aldana Cohen, and Thea Riofrancos. 2019. *A Planet to Win: Why We Need a Green New Deal*. Verso Books.
3. Gallagher, Kelly Sims, and Xiaowei Xuan. 2019. *Titans of the Climate: Explaining Policy Process in the United States and China*. MIT Press.
4. Karol, David. 2019. *Red, Green, and Blue: The Partisan Divide on Environmental Issues*. Cambridge University Press.
5. [Optional] Lazarus, Richard J. 2020. *The Rule of Five: Making Climate History at the Supreme Court*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press: An Imprint of Harvard University Press.
6. [Optional] Stokes, Leah Cardamore. 2020. *Short Circuiting Policy: Interest Groups and the Battle Over Clean Energy and Climate Policy in the American States*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Week-by-Week Topics

Week 1

1. Course Introduction
 - a. No assigned readings

Week 2

2. The science of climate change, Part I
 - a. Kang, Suchul, and Elfatih A. B. Eltahir. 2018. “North China Plain Threatened by Deadly Heatwaves Due to Climate Change and Irrigation.” *Nature Communications* 9(1): 2894.
 - b. [Optional: *Economist* briefings – six short articles.]
3. The science of climate change, Part II
 - a. Kim, Jiyeon, Ajin Lee, and Maya Rossin-Slater. 2019. “What to Expect When It Gets Hotter: The Impacts of Prenatal Exposure to Extreme Heat on Maternal Health.” *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series*. <https://www.nber.org/papers/w26384.pdf> (July 6, 2020).
 - b. [Optional] Victor, David G. 2011. *Global Warming Gridlock: Creating More Effective Strategies for Protecting the Planet*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2.
 - c. [Optional: watch *An Inconvenient Sequel*]

Week 3

4. Basics of climate politics
 - a. Ostrom, Elinor. 2010. “Polycentric Systems for Coping with Collective Action and Global Environmental Change.” *Global Environmental Change* 20(4): 550–57.
 - b. Okereke, Chukwumerije. 2018. “Equity and Justice in Polycentric Climate Governance.” In Jordan et al., *Governing Climate Change: Polycentricity in Action?*, Cambridge University Press.
 - c. Parr, Christianna, Nives Dolsak, and Aseem Prakash. 2019. “Analysis | The Amazon Isn’t the Only Forest That’s Burning. Can Consumer Pressure Stop the Destruction?” *Washington Post*.
5. Why are solutions so hard?
 - a. Harrison, Kathryn, and Lisa McIntosh Sundstrom. 2007. “The Comparative Politics of Climate Change.” *Global Environmental Politics* 7(4): 1–18.
 - b. Johnson, Ayana Elizabeth “I’m a Black Climate Expert. Racism Derails Our Efforts to Save the Planet.” *Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/06/03/im-black-climate-scientist-racism-derails-our-efforts-save-planet/> (June 3, 2020).

Part II: Climate Perspectives, Climate Solutions

Week 4

6. Designing solutions
 - a. Harvey, Hal et al. *Designing Climate Solutions*, Introduction (p.1-20)
 - b. Meckling, Jonas, Nina Kelsey, Eric Biber, and John Zysman. 2015. “Winning Coalitions for Climate Policy.” *Science* 349(6253): 1170–1171.
7. Public opinion on climate
 - c. Karol, David. 2019. *Red, Green, and Blue: The Partisan Divide on Environmental Issues*. Cambridge University Press. Pages 1-15, 64-76
 - d. Motta et al. 2019. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/06/05/do-most-americans-believe-climate-change-answer-is-more-complicated-than-you-might-think/>
 - e. Prakash, Aseem, and Nives Dolsak. “Americans Say They’re Worried about Climate Change – so Why Don’t They Vote That Way?” *The Conversation*. <http://theconversation.com/americans-say-theyre-worried-about-climate-change-so-why-dont-they-vote-that-way-110874>

Week 5

8. Green New Deal
 - a. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez et al. (July 2019). H. Res. 109, Recognizing the Duty of the Federal Government to Create a Green New Deal. 116th Congress. URL: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-resolution/109/text>.
 - b. Aronoff, Kate et al. 2019. *A Planet to Win*. Introduction.
 - c. Tooze, Adam. “Why Central Banks Need to Step Up on Global Warming.” *Foreign Policy*. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/07/20/why-central-banks-need-to-step-up-on-global-warming/>
 - d. Dolsak, Nives, and Aseem Prakash. 2019. “The Green New Deal And The New Politics Of Climate Change.” *Forbes*.
9. Critics and Complications of Green New Deal
 - a. Michelle Cordero (2019). “The Green New Deal: What’s in the resolution, how much would it cost, and would it even stop global warming?” In: Heritage Explains. Heritage Foundation. URL: <https://www.heritage.org/renewable-energy/heritage-explains/the-green-new-deal>
 - b. Rabe, Barry. 2020. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2020/06/23/the-limitations-of-a-climate-change-presidency/>
 - c. Brower, D. 2020. “Biden energy plan not based in reality, says Harold Hamm,” *Financial Times* (June 30).
 - d. Wald, Ellen. 2020. “A Hopeful House Climate Plan Has a Big Hole,” Bloomberg Opinion.

Week 6

10. Paths forward [Guest lecturer: Omar Afzaal]
 - a. Harvey, Hal et al. *Designing Climate Solutions*, Chapter 3 (p.53-68)
 - b. Ghosh, Arunabha. 2020. CEEW report, “Jobs, Growth, and Sustainability.” Executive Summary only.
11. Climate perspectives
 - a. Busby, Joshua. 2018. “Warming World.” *Foreign Affairs* 97(4): 49–55.
 - b. Birch, Tony. 2006. “Climate Change, Mining and Traditional Indigenous Knowledge in Australia.” *Social Inclusion* 4(1): 92–101.
 - c. Worland, Justin. 2020. “Why the Larger Climate Movement Is Finally Embracing the Fight Against Environmental Racism.” *Time*.
<https://time.com/5864704/environmental-racism-climate-change/> (July 22, 2020).

Week 7 – TEST (Oct 20 – 22)

12. TAKE-HOME TEST #1
 - a. [Essay response to a pre-set writing prompt.]
 - b. [No readings]
13. Big Oil [*Guest Speaker*: Irja Vormedal]
 - c. Vormedal, Irja, Lars H. Gulbrandsen, and Jon Birger Skjærseth. 2020. “Big Oil and Climate Regulation: Business as Usual or a Changing Business?” *Global Environmental Politics* 10(Y): 1–23.
 - d. Kyra Bos, Joyeeta Gupta. 2018. “Climate change: the risks of stranded fossil fuel assets and resources to the developing world.” *Third World Quarterly* 39 (3), 436-453
14. Friday October 23: Nelson Center Event (12pm – 1pm)
 - a. [no readings]

Week 8 – Norms and governance (Oct 27 – 29)

15. Energy
 - a. Blondeel, Mathieu, Jeff Colgan, and Thijs Van de Graaf. 2019. “What Drives Norm Success? Evidence from Anti-Fossil Fuel Campaigns.” *Global Environmental Politics* 19(4): 63–84.
 - b. Stokes, Leah Cardamore. 2020. *Short Circuiting Policy*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 1.
 - c. Armstrong, Robert. 2020. “The appeal of ESG investing is for dupes only,” *Financial Times* (Aug 24).
 - d. Umunna, Chuka. 2020. “ESG skeptics rely on straw men to discredit change,” *Financial Times* (Sept 3).
16. Transnational governance
 - a. Bulkeley, Harriet et al. 2012. “Governing Climate Change Transnationally: Assessing the Evidence from a Database of Sixty Initiatives.” *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 30(4): 591–612.

- b. Okereke, Chukwumerije, Harriet Bulkeley, and Heike Schroeder. 2009. “Conceptualizing Climate Governance beyond the International Regime.” *Global environmental politics* 9(1): 58–78.

Week 9 (Nov 3 and 5)

17. The climate future

- a. Bernstein, Steven, and Matthew Hoffmann. 2019. “Climate Politics, Metaphors and the Fractal Carbon Trap.” *Nature Climate Change*: 1–7.
 - b. Jinnah, Sikina, Simon Nicholson, and Jane Flegal. 2018. “Toward Legitimate Governance of Solar Geoengineering Research: A Role for Sub-State Actors.” *Ethics, Policy & Environment* 21(3): 362–81.
18. [Thursday Nov 5 class is 4:00 – 5:15pm, Guest Speaker: Professor Kelly Gallagher]
- c. Gallagher, Kelly Sims, and Xiaowei Xuan. 2019. *Titans of the Climate: Explaining Policy Process in the United States and China*. MIT Press. Chapters 1 and 4.
 - d. Ross, Michael L., Chad Hazlett, and Paasha Mahdavi. 2017. “Global Progress and Backsliding on Gasoline Taxes and Subsidies.” *Nature Energy* 2(1): 16201.

Week 10 – Scales of climate politics (Nov 10 and 12)

19. Coastal Real Estate & Finance -- PLUS GUEST SPEAKER: Solomon Goldstein-Rose
- a. Colgan, Jeff D. 2018. “The Market Is Valuing Climate Risk All Wrong.” *Global Policy*. <https://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/blog/06/07/2018/market-valuing-climate-risk-all-wrong> (August 2, 2018).
 - b. Javeline, Debra, Tracy Kijewski-Correa, and Angela Chesler. 2019. “Does It Matter If You ‘Believe’ in Climate Change? Not for Coastal Home Vulnerability.” *Climatic Change* 155(4): 511–532.
 - c. *The Economist*. 2020. “Hotting up - How much can financiers do about climate change?”
 - d. *In-class*: www.floodfactor.com
20. THURSDAY Nov 12 class (no Guest Speaker)
- a. [Catch up on readings]

Week 11 – Climate and International Trade

21. Impact of Trade [Guest Speaker: Sen. Heidi Heitkamp]

- a. Genovese, Federica. 2019. “Sectors, Pollution, and Trade: How Industrial Interests Shape Domestic Positions on Global Climate Agreements.” *International Studies Quarterly* 63(4): 819–36.
 - b. Colgan, Jeff D., Jessica F. Green, and Thomas N. Hale. 2020. “Asset Revaluation and the Existential Politics of Climate Change.” *International Organization* (Forthcoming).
22. TAKE-HOME TEST #2

- c. [Essay response to a pre-set writing prompt.]
- d. [No readings]

Week 12 – Conclusion

23. Course wrap-up.

- a. Mach, Katharine J. et al. 2019. “Climate as a Risk Factor for Armed Conflict.” *Nature* 571(7764): 193–197.
- b. Klinsky, Sonja et al. 2017. “Why Equity Is Fundamental in Climate Change Policy Research.” *Global Environmental Change* 44: 170–173.

OPTIONAL READINGS

1. Keohane, Robert O., and David G. Victor. 2011. “The Regime Complex for Climate Change.” *Perspectives on politics* 9(1): 7–23.
2. IRENA. 2019. “A New World: The Geopolitics of the Energy Transformation,” <https://www.irena.org/publications/2019/Jan/A-New-World-The-Geopolitics-of-the-Energy-Transformation>
3. Hadden, Jennifer. 2015. *Networks in Contention: The Divisive Politics of Climate Change*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
4. Aklin, Michaël, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2018. *Renewables: The Politics of a Global Energy Transition*. MIT Press.
5. Victor, David, Frank Geels, and Simone Sharpe 2019. *Accelerating the Low Carbon Transition*. Brookings.
6. Van de Graaf, Thijs, Indra Overland, Daniel Scholten, and Kirsten Westphal. 2020. “The New Oil? The Geopolitics and International Governance of Hydrogen.” *Energy Research & Social Science* 70: 101667.
7. Dubash, Navroz. 2019. *India in a Warming World*. Chapter 1.
8. Downie, Christian. 2019. *Business Battles in the US Energy Sector: Lessons for a Clean Energy Transition*. Routledge.
9. Morin, Jean-Frédéric, and Sikina Jinnah. 2018. “The Untapped Potential of Preferential Trade Agreements for Climate Governance.” *Environmental Politics* 27(3): 541–65.
10. Bazilian, Morgan et al. “Four Scenarios of the Energy Transition: Drivers, Consequences, and Implications for Geopolitics.” *WIREs Climate Change*: e625.
11. Conca, Ken, Joe Thwaites, and Goueun Lee. 2017. “Climate Change and the UN Security Council: Bully Pulpit or Bull in a China Shop?” *Global Environmental Politics* 17(2): 1–20.
12. Kennard, Amanda. Forthcoming. “The Enemy of My Enemy: When Firms Support Climate Change Regulation.” *International Organization*: 1–35.
13. Allan, Bentley B. 2017. “Producing the Climate: States, Scientists, and the Constitution of Global Governance Objects.” *International Organization* 71(1): 131–162.

14. Erin Graham, (2020), “Climate Crisis” – Contribution to the Seabrooke and Pevehouse (eds.) *Oxford Handbook of IPE* (forthcoming 2021)
15. Tucker, Todd. “The Green New Deal: A Ten-Year Window to Reshape International Economic Law.” Roosevelt Institute Working Paper
16. Zelli, Fariborz et al., eds. 2020. *Governing the Climate-Energy Nexus: Institutional Complexity and Its Challenges to Effectiveness and Legitimacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/governing-the-climateenergy-nexus/87F5A10BD95C94B1245DF2F9CA5D00B5> (August 11, 2020).
17. Penney, Veronica. 2020. “How Facebook deals with climate disinformation,” *New York Times*.
18. Wainwright, Joel, and Geoff Mann. 2018. *Climate Leviathan: A Political Theory of Our Planetary Future*. London ; New York: Verso.

RESOURCES

1. IPCC, 2018: Summary for Policymakers. In: Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty [Masson-Delmotte, V., P. Zhai, H.-O. Pörtner, D. Roberts, J. Skea, P.R. Shukla, A. Pirani, W. Moufouma-Okia, C. Péan, R. Pidcock, S. Connors, J.B.R. Matthews, Y. Chen, X. Zhou, M.I. Gomis, E. Lonnoy, T. Maycock, M. Tignor, and T. Waterfield (eds.)]. Online at https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/05/SR15_SPM_version_report_LR.pdf
2. NY Times Climate - <https://www.nytimes.com/section/climate>
3. Washington Post/Monkey Cage Topic Guide: Climate Change – <https://docs.google.com/document/u/1/d/e/2PACX-1vSGX3e4RD5UhofZfaMEKTcce-NFqWaOwXrmoiY9DdSNYiIAUQ07ppgZAwYlIrWf0Z74P-PeQUdj6ecl/pub>
4. HBS Impacted Weighted Accounts: <https://www.hbs.edu/impact-weighted-accounts/Pages/default.aspx>
5. Policy Options, Special Feature: The Evolution of Carbon Pricing in the Provinces, 11 short pieces. <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/july-2019/the-evolution-of-carbonpricing-in-the-provinces/>

Academic Administrative Statements

Privacy Notice

This course has combined sections. It is possible that students from other sections will be able to view who is enrolled in the course (from all sections).

Books, Supplies, and Materials

If your Brown undergraduate financial aid package includes the Book/Course Material Support Pilot Program (BCMS), concerns or questions about the cost of books and course materials for this or any other Brown course (including RISD courses via cross-registration) can be addressed to bcms@brown.edu. For all other concerns related to non-tuition course-related expenses, whether or not your Brown undergraduate financial aid package includes BCMS, please visit the Academic Emergency Fund in E-GAP (within the umbrella of "E-Gap Funds" in UFunds) to determine options for financing these costs, while ensuring your privacy.

Accessibility and Accommodations

Brown University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform me early in the term if you may require accommodations or modification of any of course procedures. You may speak with me after class, during office hours, or by appointment. If you need accommodations around online learning or in classroom accommodations, please be sure to reach out to Student Accessibility Services (SAS) for their assistance (seas@brown.edu, 401-863-9588). Students in need of short-term academic advice or support can contact one of the academic deans in the College.

Class Recording and Distribution of Materials

I would like to record our discussion because some students may be in different time zones, have poor internet connections, or have health issues. This means that we will record all classes to make them available to all students that are enrolled but cannot be present. If you have questions or concerns about this protocol, please contact me so that we can talk through those to also ensure your full participation in this course.

Lectures and other course materials are copyrighted. Students are prohibited from reproducing, making copies, publicly displaying, selling, or otherwise distributing the recordings or transcripts of the materials. The only exception is that students with disabilities may have the right to record for their private use if that method is determined to be a reasonable accommodation by Student Accessibility Services. Disregard of the University's copyright policy and federal copyright law is a Student Code of Conduct violation.

Instructions for Final Paper

General

You may choose to do one of two types of papers:

1. Compare and contrast the behavior of climate “doers vs. deniers” within a category of actor, like cities, firms, or provinces/states
2. Create a “business plan” to solve some problem related to climate change (broadly conceived), inspired by the Hal Harvey textbook. In the plan, you would show how student/citizens (i.e., you) can address it. Identify all of the elements necessary to execute your plan: specific goals, strategy, required funding and resources, timeline, key actors, success indicators, etc.

Submission

Submit an electronic copy to your TA (not the professor) via Canvas.

Deadline, Formatting, Structure, Grading, etc.

See the document “Instructions on Final Paper”