

Urban and Environmental Policy 230
Climate Justice: Theory and Practice, Tues and Thurs 1:30-3:00pm
Professor Mijin Cha

Office Hours

UEP Dept #104; T/TH 3-4:30 or by appointment

What is this course about?

This course is an overview of climate change-- What it is? What/who is responsible for it? How we can stave off the worst impacts? This class is for those who believe that climate change is occurring and is a threat to global society and economies. This course looks at theoretical and scientific underpinnings of climate change and different policy and organizing approaches to addressing climate change. The course is structured for us, as a group, to learn about these issues and discuss them in small groups, during and outside of class.

What are the goals of this course?

The goals of this course are to examine the idea climate change and how it intersects with ideas of justice. This course explores the intersection of race, poverty, and climate change. Finally, this course will help students begin to critically examine climate solutions and present case studies of climate justice issues in the U.S. and across the world.

Course Requirements

Participation (30%): You are expected to do all of the course readings and keep up to date. This is a reading intensive seminar. Attendance and preparation is required. Participation in class (coming to class and being a part of it) counts for 20% of your grade. You may only miss class *once* without prior approval. And you may miss *once* with approval. Any additional absences will result in an automatic decrease by one grade (a B will become a B-, for example). Your participation in class will also be evaluated based on your ability to contribute to the class discussions as a whole. Be mindful of your own contribution but also the overall classroom dynamic. Listen attentively to others, recognize when to “step up” and “step back” to contribute to a productive discussion that enables meaningful participation by others in the class.

Participation also includes completing a short (2-3) paper due: **Thursday, March 23**. The paper will be a short case study of climate advocacy. Please be prepared to discuss your case study in class.

Participation also includes preparing discussion questions twice during the semester. Each student will prepare discussion questions for two classes during the semester that will act as prompts for class discussion. Discussion questions should critically examine the reading or issues assigned and not be a “summary” question.

Midterm Exam (25%): You will have an in-class mid-term on **Tuesday, Feb 28**. The midterm will be discussed in more detail in class.

Group Presentation (25%): You will work with 2-3 of your fellow classmates to research and present an in-depth case study of climate justice in the U.S. or globally. More details will be discussed in class.

Final Paper (20%): Final papers are due Friday, December 5th by 5pm. You must submit two hard copies to the UEP department, as well as an electronic version to whomever is leading your section. Papers will be based on the in class group presentation and more details will follow.

COURSE POLICIES

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism consists of any form of passing off, or attempting to pass off, the knowledge or work of others as your own. It is a form of cheating. Examples of plagiarism include: unattributed quotations from a book, magazine or article; copying from the notes or essays of others; the submission of work actually written or dictated by others; and unattributed use of other people's ideas. Remember, plagiarism includes information from books, newspapers, journals and the Internet. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course and possible expulsion from the college. Students should consult Occidental's student handbook for information on academic misconduct policy at the college: <http://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics/academic-misconduct>.

Classroom Community

This course is intended to provoke discussion and new understandings of the urban environment we live in. Toward this end, the course will grapple with discussions about inequity, power, race, class, and gender. We expect our classroom to be a productive space for open, honest, and thoughtful discussion that recognizes and respects differences and acknowledges the broad range of knowledge we bring to the classroom and discussion. Please remember that our focus in this course is the issues, texts, course materials and presentations themselves, and not the personalities, identities, or opinions of other participants in the discussion.

Laptops and Cellphones

Electronic devices in the classroom limit full participation in class. In order for you to pay attention and engage in learning and minimize distractions to others, laptops are not allowed unless they are necessary for note-taking, which must receive prior approval from your professor. Cell phones and all other electronic devices are to be turned off or put on silent. Students who are not paying attention in class will be marked as absent.

Course Readings will be posted on Moodle. Please complete readings for the day they are assigned. Readings will largely follow the syllabus but are subject to some changes. Please pay attention to the Moodle site for any changes to the schedule and/or the readings

Support Services

The college provides a set of resources to students to support them in learning. The [Writing Center](#) provides writing assistance to students to develop ideas, draft, and revise papers.

Students with documented disabilities who are registered with Disability Services are required to present their accommodation letter to the instructor at the beginning of each semester or as soon as possible thereafter. Any student who experiences significant physical or mental impairments may contact Disability Services at (323) 259-2969 to learn about available services and support. More information is available at <http://www.oxy.edu/disability-services>

The Emmons Wellness Center also provides important support services and can help you address issues of stress, medical and mental health, and overall well-being. For more information, see their website at <http://www.oxy.edu/emmons-wellness-center>

Week 1: Tuesday, Jan 24

Class overview
What is Climate Change?

Reading: *Historical Overview of Climate Change Science*:
<http://biblioteca.climantica.org/resources/37/05-ar4wg1-ch01-historicaloverview.pdf>

Thursday, Jan 26

Where do emissions come from? The relationship between capitalism and climate change

Readings:
Climate Change and Capitalism:
<http://www.consiliencejournal.org/index.php/consilience/article/viewFile/408/238>

EPA: *U.S. Greenhouse Gases and Sinks*:
<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-04/documents/us-ghg-inventory-2016-chapter-executive-summary.pdf>

Week 2: Tuesday, Jan 31

The Science of Climate Change: What is happening to the earth?

Guest Lecture: Professor Darren Larsen

Thursday, Feb 2

The Science of Climate Change: What is happening to oceans, glaciers, and land?

Readings:

IPCC: Oceans:

http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/WGIIAR5-Chap6_FINAL.pdf

IPCC: Food Security and Food Production (Sections 7.1-7.4):

http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/WGIIAR5-Chap7_FINAL.pdf

(Group discussions and presentation in-class- present impacts)

Week 3: Tuesday, Feb 7

Climate change and communities

Readings:

U.S. Global Change Research Program: *The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health: A Scientific Assessment-*

https://s3.amazonaws.com/climatehealth2016/low/ClimateHealth2016_ExecSummary_Standalone_small.pdf

(maybe Social Vulnerability to Climate Change and the Architecture of Entitlements)

Thursday, Feb 9

The politics of climate change: What causes climate denial?

Readings:

Mike Hulme, *Why We Disagree about Climate Change: Understanding Controversy, Inaction, and Opportunity*, Ch. 3- *The Performance of Science*, Ch. 5- *The Things We Believe*

What Exxon knew about the Earth's melting Arctic: <http://graphics.latimes.com/exxon-arctic/>

Week 4: Tuesday, Feb 14

The politics of climate change 2: How climate change became a partisan issue

Readings:

Sociological Quarterly: *The Politicization Of Climate Change And Polarization In The American Public's Views Of Global Warming, 2001-2010*:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227711861_The_Politicization_Of_Climate_Change_And_Polarization_In_The_American_Public%27s_Views_Of_Global_Warming_2001-2010

Ronald Brownstein, *The Atlantic*: *How Carbon Emissions Explain Trump's Win*

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/12/trump-cabinet-carbon-emissions/510683/>

Thursday, Feb 16

What do we talk about when we talk about justice?

Guest lecture: Professor Ainsley Lesure

Week 5: Tuesday, Feb 21

Before climate justice, environmental justice

Reading:

Dorceta Taylor, *The Rise of the Environmental Justice Paradigm: Injustice Framing and the Social Construction of Environmental Discourses*:

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0002764200043004003>

Thursday, Feb 23

Moving from environmental justice to climate justice

Reading:

Global Issues: *Climate Justice and Equity*:

<http://www.globalissues.org/article/231/climate-justice-and-equity>

Week 6: Tuesday, Feb 28: IN-CLASS MIDTERM

Thursday, March 2—NO CLASS,

Week 7: NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK

Week 8: Tuesday, March 14

Climate change and cost- cost benefit analysis and the social cost of carbon

Reading:

Pricing the Priceless: Cost-Benefit Analysis of Environmental Protection:
<http://0-www.jstor.org.oasys.lib.oxy.edu/stable/pdf/3312947.pdf>

Social Cost of Carbon:
<https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/Downloads/EPAactivities/social-cost-carbon.pdf>

Thursday, March 16

Climate solutions: Who does what? Analysis of market based solutions

Readings:

Market Mechanisms: Understanding Solutions:
<https://www.c2es.org/docUploads/market-mechanisms-brief.pdf>

Lawsuit by low-income groups may delay climate law:
<http://californiawatch.org/dailyreport/lawsuit-low-income-groups-may-delay-climate-law-8582>

Why the environmental justice lawsuit against California's climate law is misguided:
<http://grist.org/climate-policy/2011-05-23-environmental-justice-lawsuit-against-californias-climate-law/>

Week 9: Tuesday, March 21

Climate solutions: Who does what, part 2: Federal, State, and/or local?

Readings:

From the Bottom Up Local and Subnational Climate Change Politics:
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1070496508326432>

Think Globally, Act Globally: The Limits of Local Climate Policies: <http://0-www.jstor.org.oasys.lib.oxy.edu/stable/pdf/40041388.pdf>

Thursday, March 23

Climate solutions: Who does what, part 3: the role of civil society

Executive summary - Southern voices on climate policy choices: analysis of and lessons learned from civil society advocacy on climate change:
<http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/G03360.pdf>

Browse full report: <http://pubs.iied.org/10032IIED/>

Assignment: Come to class with a 2-3 page write up of a case study of climate advocacy. Be prepared to present it.

Week 10: Tuesday, March 28

Policy solutions: energy

Readings:

Renewable Energy Policies and Barriers:

http://www.martinot.info/Beck_Martinot_AP.pdf

Why the United States Does Not Have a Renewable Energy Policy:

https://www.cov.com/~media/files/corporate/publications/2013/02/why_the_united_states_does_not_have_a_renewable_energy_policy.pdf

Energy Justice: A Whole Systems Approach:

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Darren_McCauley2/publication/274084170_Energy_Justice_a_Whole_Systems_Approach/links/5515e6e80cf2b5d6a0ec5d61.pdf

Thursday, March 30

Policy solutions: buildings and transportation

Readings:

Mitigating Climate Change Through Green Buildings and Smart Growth:

<https://smartech.gatech.edu/bitstream/handle/1853/23806/wp23.pdf>

An Agenda for Equity: A Framework for Building a Just Transportation System in Los Angeles County:

https://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/242/docs/Agenda_Equity_Full_Report_Web02.pdf
(pg. 11-39 only)

Week 11: Tuesday, April 4

Policy solutions: Moving to a low-carbon economy

Readings:

A Climate Jobs Program for New York State:

https://www.ilr.cornell.edu/sites/ilr.cornell.edu/files/NYSClimateJobsProgram-Reccomendations_0-1.pdf

Just Transition, Just What is it?

http://www.labor4sustainability.org/files/Just_Transition_Just_What_Is_It.pdf

A Just Transition for US Fossil Fuel Workers: <http://prospect.org/article/just-transition-us-fossil-fuel-industry-workers>

Thursday, April 6

Climate solutions: impact litigation

Guest Speaker supported by Remsen Bird Fund: Caroline Farrell, Executive Director,
Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment.

Readings: TBD

Week 12: Tuesday, April 11

Climate solutions: International agreements

Readings; TBD

Thursday, April 13

Climate solutions: International agreements (or first set of class presentations)

Week 13: Tuesday, April 18

Class Presentations

Thursday, April 20

Class Presentations

Week 14: Tuesday, April 25

Class Presentations

Thursday, April 27

Class Presentations