

Urban and Environmental Policy 230
Climate Justice: Theory and Practice, Tues and Thurs 1:30-2:55pm
Swan 111
Professor Mijin Cha

Office Hours

UEP Dept #204; 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? What is the way forward, particularly given the current political moment? 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. (total of **2** absences). 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 preparing discussion questions for each class. We will choose one or two of the discussion questions to guide discussion each class period. Discussion questions should critically examine the reading or issues assigned and not be a “summary” question.

Participation will also include leading one class discussion. Students will pick one topic of your choosing and work with me to choose appropriate readings. Students will be expected to meet with me in advance of leading the class to discuss the structure and outline for the class.

Midterm Exam (25%): You will have an in-class mid-term on **Thursday, March 8**. The midterm will be discussed in more detail in class.

Group Presentation (25%): You will work with a fellow classmate 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, May 4th by 5pm**. You must submit a hard copy to the UEP department. 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 23

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 25

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

Readings:
Climate Change and Capitalism: <https://journals.cdrs.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2016/09/408-1121-2-PB.pdf>

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 30

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)

Thursday, Feb 1

Climate change and people

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_Stand-alone_small.pdf

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

Week 3: Tuesday, Feb 6

Climate change and people, part 2.—The crisis of climate refugees, or not?

Readings:

Asylum applications respond to temperature fluctuations:

<http://science.sciencemag.org.oxy.idm.oclc.org/content/sci/358/6370/1610.full.pdf>

Rethinking climate refugees and climate conflict: Rhetoric, reality and the politics of policy discourse:

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.475.366&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

Thursday, Feb 8

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*

Assessing ExxonMobil's climate change communications (1977–2014):

<http://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/aa815f/pdf>

Week 4: Tuesday, Feb 13

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/>

The Rockefellers vs. the Company That Made Them Rockefellers:

<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2018/01/the-rockefellers-vs-exxon.html>

Thursday, Feb 15—NO CLASS

Week 5: Tuesday, Feb 20

What do we talk about when we talk about justice?

Guest lecture: Professor Ainsley Lesure

Thursday, Feb 23

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>

Week 6: Tuesday, Feb 27

Moving from environmental justice to climate justice

Reading:

Global Issues: *Climate Justice and Equity*:

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

Thursday, March 1

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>

Week 7: Tuesday, March 6

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

Readings:

Market Mechanisms: Understanding Solutions:

<https://www.c2es.org/docUploads/market-mechanisms-brief.pdf>

Thursday, March 8: IN- CLASS MIDTERM

Week 8: NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK

Week 9: Tuesday, March 20—

Market-based solutions, part 2

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/>

Thursday, March 22— The trouble with cap and trade and social justice lawyering

Guest Speaker: Caroline Farrell, Executive Director, Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment

Readings:

Determining the Fate of AB 32: <https://www.law360.com/articles/226089/determining-the-fate-of-ab-32>

Landmark U.S. Federal Climate Lawsuit: <https://www.ourchildrenstrust.org/us/federal-lawsuit/>

Week 10: Tuesday, March 27-- LAYLA

Thursday, March 29— PERI

Week 11: Tuesday, April 3-- JACKIE

Thursday, April 5-- SARA

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 12: Tuesday, April 10—NICO

Climate solutions: International agreements

Andrew Guzman, *A Compliance-Based Theory of International*

Law: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/3481436.pdf>

Robert O. Keohane and David G. Victor, *The Regime Complex for Climate*

Change: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/41622723.pdf>

Climate solutions: International agreements

Kyoto Protocol: <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/kpeng.pdf>

Paris Climate Accords:

http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf

Thursday, April 12-- SPRUCE

Week 13: Tuesday, April 17- Class Presentations- in class preparation

Thursday, April 19

Class Presentations- in class preparation

Week 14: Tuesday, April 24

Class Presentations

Thursday, April 26- **FIELD TRIP**

The Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment will give the toxic tour of the Central Valley.
Sponsored by LA Encounters and Remsen Bird Funds.

Week 15: Tuesday, May 1

Class Presentations

FINAL PAPERS DUE: Friday, May 4