

Climate Change Policy
Spring 2024 - 11:374:426:01
Wednesdays, 2 to 5 pm, Blake 131

Instructor:

Dr. Pamela McElwee

Professor, Department of Human Ecology

Cook Office Building, Room 215

pamela.mcelwee@rutgers.edu

office ph: 848-932-9209 (please use email as the preferred method of communication)

Office Hours: By email appointment

Course Description

This course is an advanced seminar that examines topics in social, cultural and political aspects of climate change policy. We will look at the science of climate change and why it has been so contested in some quarters; the existing and predicted physical, cultural and societal impacts of climate change and how policies are developed to avoid or adapt to these; how vulnerability to climate change is measured and whether societies will be able to adapt to forecasted changes; multiscale policies from local levels to international levels to mitigate or adapt to climate impacts; and the ethical and social justice dimensions of different policies for climate change.

Course Objectives

At the end of the course, students will have met several goals.

Goal 1: Understand key definitions, concepts, histories, and theories in the field of climate change policy

Goal 2: Apply key class concepts to real-world climate problems

Goal 3: Develop analytical skills to assess the myriad challenges that climate change poses to societies

To meet these goals, the course focuses on three primary activities:

(1) core readings, lectures, and discussion

(2) written assignments to apply substantive issues

(3) examining real world examples through films and simulations

Assessment methods for the above goals will include:

Goal 1: Participation in class to discuss key concepts and readings

Goal 2: Individual assignment exercises engaging with a real-world policy problem

Goal 3: A final paper (alongside a draft outline and presentation)

Required Reading

There is one required text for the course, available at the Rutgers bookstore and online via the Rutgers library.

- Dryzek, J et al (2013) *Climate Challenged Society*. Oxford University Press. ISBN 9780199660100

You can access the PDF chapters here: <https://doi-org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/10.1093/oso/9780199660100.001.0001>

Other required readings will be posted online at our Canvas site by module/date of class.

Canvas site

Announcements, additional online readings, assignments folders and other materials will be posted on Canvas. Please make sure you have your settings so that you can receive email communication from the site. To access the Canvas course site, please visit <https://canvas.rutgers.edu> and log in using your netID. For more assistance with Canvas support contact Canvas Help at <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/canvas-help/> or email help@canvas.rutgers.edu or call 877-361-1134.

Classroom meetings

Please note that while this is not technically a hybrid class, I am currently co-chairing a major UN science assessment report that requires frequent travel. I have built my travel into the class periods so that on the days that I am not in NJ, we will not meet in-person but instead have films and recorded lectures on Canvas. The syllabus indicates those dates for which I have confirmed I will not be able to meet in person. There may be additional shifts in these dates as travel times firm up, so please stay on top of announcements on Canvas.

Similarly, COVID is now on the rise again and there may be times when some of us have it; please let me know as soon as you know if you should isolate.

Despite the various modes in which we will be working, I expect students to stay engaged and attend classes regularly, as attendance and participation are included in your final grade.

Requirements & Grading

This course will serve as a vehicle to emphasize reading skills, discussion skills, and writing skills of the student. This is an upper level seminar, so there will be a fairly intense amount of reading and writing spread throughout the semester. Because we only meet once a week, each class session is equivalent to two regular period classes. Please budget your time for homework that you can devote the necessary time to staying up to date with the readings. Students are expected to do all of the required readings for the assigned dates and to be prepared to discuss them in class. I reserve the right to call on any student in class: please be prepared! Pop quizzes may be given at any time throughout the semester, particularly if I feel discussion is suffering from a lack of preparation.

Written work and their points are listed in the table below. Dates and details of assignments will be finalized throughout the course. Please discuss with me if any assignment or due date is unclear. There are 100 points that are possible to achieve in the work in this class. I will grade according to the following university scale. Cutoffs are firm, especially given the use of pluses and minuses

A	90-100
B+	89-88
B	80-87
C+	79-78

- C 70-77
D 60-69
F 59 and under

The points you will be graded on in the class include the following assignments:

Assignment	Points (100 total)	Due Date
Class assignments (6 total)	30	Throughout semester
Final Paper: draft (5pts) + presentation (10 pts) + final paper (25pts)	40	Throughout semester
Participation/discussion (can include pop quizzes)	30	Throughout semester

CLASS AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Instructor contact:

Email is a medium that should be used carefully. I do not answer emails immediately and especially not on nights and weekends, so be aware that emailing me the night before assignments are due is not acceptable. Please plan ahead and try to make use of live office hours, not email, for more complicated or in-depth discussions.

Attendance and Make-ups

Because this is a seminar-type class, attendance and participation is an important part of making the class work. Excessive absences will detract from your participation grade. You will need to actively participate in class sessions in order to earn the full points for participation. Additionally, if you cannot attend a class it is YOUR responsibility to obtain notes, syllabi changes, assignments etc. from another student. If you know you will have to miss class in advance because of something beyond your control (NOT, for example, a routine appointment), let me know (with relevant documentation) in time to arrange when you should hand in any work. Make-up after the fact is available only for a documented emergency. Students who will miss class due to an athletic competition or other official university events are required to follow official university policies if they wish to make up an assignment. You must notify me immediately, and at that time we can make arrangements for turning in missed work. Those who fail to do so will not be accommodated.

Withdrawals and Incompletes

Please see me if you feel you will need to withdraw from the class. You will need to follow university rules on dates for withdrawal. I will not give incompletes for this course, except for extreme emergency situations such as family problems or illnesses that you or an immediate

family member suffer that would make it impossible for you to come to class. Documentation is required.

Academic dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty is not tolerated in any shape or form. If you are unclear on what constitutes dishonesty, please see the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy at <https://slwordpress.rutgers.edu/academicintegrity/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2014/11/AIPolicy2013.pdf> . Dishonesty includes any form of plagiarism, cheating on tests, and other things. **I have a zero-tolerance policy on academic dishonesty:** An initial incident will result in the student receiving no credit for the assignment. A second incident will result in a failure in the class, and a grade of XF is an option for cases in which I feel there has been serious misconduct. *It is your responsibility to be aware of what plagiarism is, and not to do it in any shape or form.* There may be additional university consequences, including expulsion.

In addition to the usual academic dishonesty policies, I strongly encourage students not to rely on any AI chatbots for work in this class. In addition to the inaccuracies such chatbots currently produce on simple factual matters, they don't provide a chance for you to strengthen your own critical writing or thinking skills. The assignments in the class are specifically designed to not be ones that chatbots can write for you, and current detection software on Canvas will highlight for me if use of chatbots in written assignments is suspected. Do your own work.

Disability Services Statement

If you are entitled to a disability accommodation, I encourage you to request it. Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey abides by Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1998, and the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination. If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please contact me early in the semester so that I can provide or facilitate in providing accommodations you may need. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the Office of Disability Services, the designated office on campus to provide services and administer exams with accommodations for students with disabilities. The Office of Disability Services can be reached at 732-932-2848.

Other University Services:

The faculty and staff at Rutgers are committed to your success. Students who are successful tend to seek out resources that enable them to excel academically, maintain their health and wellness, prepare for future careers, navigate college life and finances, and connect with the RU community. Resources that can help you succeed and connect with the Rutgers community can be found at success.rutgers.edu, and nearly all services and resources that are typically provided in-person are now available remotely. All services are contingent on the ongoing COVID epidemic. Please check websites.

Schedule of Class Periods and Readings:

This schedule is subject to change – pay attention to Canvas announcements.

* Indicates readings posted on-line on Canvas

WEEK ONE, Jan 17: Introduction to climate change as a wicked problem

After class read:

Dryzek et al. Ch 1, Climate's challenges

Assignment 1: Your favorite thing as impacted by climate change (as discussed in class). Bring to class Jan 24.

WEEK TWO, Jan 24: Drivers of climate change

*IPCC, 2023. Synthesis report, section A

*Jorgenson, A et al. 2019. Social science perspectives on drivers of and responses to global climate change. *WIREs Climate Change*

*Cointe, B and H. Guillemot. 2022. A history of the 1.5C target. *WIREs Climate Change*

*Tollefson, J. 2023. Is it too late to keep global warming below 1.5 °C? The challenge in 7 charts. *Nature* 21 Nov. <https://nature.com/immersive/d41586-023-03601-6/index.html>

Discuss Assignment 1 in class.

WEEK THREE, Jan 31: Social beliefs and climate change

Dryzek et al. Ch 2, Constructing science and dealing with denial

*Horsey, M. and K. Fielding. 2019. Understanding (and reducing) inaction on climate change, *Social Issues and Policy Review* 14: 3-35

*Treen, et al. 2020. Online misinformation about climate change. *WIREs Climate Change*

*Lamb WF et al. 2020. Discourses of climate delay. *Global Sustainability* 3, e17, 1–5.

Assignment 2: Find a discourse of delay or denial being used somewhere in Jan 2024, bring to class today to discuss.

WEEK FOUR, Feb 7: Impacts of climate change globally, in the US and in NJ

NO in-class meeting – work on your own

*IPCC, 2023. Synthesis report, section B

* Fifth National Climate Assessment. 2023. *Overview: Climate Change Impacts in the United States*. <https://nca2023.globalchange.gov/#overview>

* Shope, J., et al. 2022. *State of the Climate: New Jersey 2021*.

Watch film: *Rising Tides*, available at RU Library: <https://video-alexanderstreet-com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/watch/rising-tides>

Assignment 3: Pick one other NCA chapter to read from <http://nca2023.globalchange.gov> and bring 5 min summary to class Feb 14.

WEEK FIVE, Feb 14: Risk and vulnerability

* Thomas, K. et al. 2019. Explaining differential vulnerability to climate change: A social science review. *WIREs Climate Change* 10:e565.

*McElwee, P. 2021. The politics of climate vulnerability in Asia. *Education about Asia*.

*Burger, J. et al. 2019. Concerns and future preparedness plans of a vulnerable population in New Jersey following Hurricane Sandy. *Disasters* 43: 658-685.

* Biermann, F. and I. Boas. 2012. Climate Change and Human Migration: Towards a Global Governance System to Protect Climate Refugees. In J. Scheffran et al. (eds.), *Climate Change, Human Security and Violent Conflict*.

Discuss Assignment 3 in class

Assignment 4: Find a vulnerability or risk assessment for a place/people of your choice, bring to class next week (Feb 21).

WEEK SIX, Feb 21: Policy and economic tools for climate

Dryzek J et al Ch 3 - The costs of inaction and the limits of economics

* Wihbey, J. 2015. Understanding the social cost of carbon. *Yale Climate Connections*.
<https://www.yaleclimateconnections.org/2015/02/understanding-the-social-cost-of-carbon-and-connecting-it-to-our-lives/>

Dryzek, J et al. 2013. First half Ch 4 – Actions that promise and actions that fall short

*IPCC, 2023. Synthesis report, section C

*Peñasco, C., et al. 2021. Systematic review of the outcomes and trade-offs of ten types of decarbonization policy instruments. *Nature Climate Change* 11: 257-265.

Discuss assignment 4 in class.

WEEK SEVEN, Feb 28: Global climate governance history

Dryzek, J et al. Ch 6 – Governance

*Betsill, M. 2014. International climate change policy. In *The Global Environment: Institutions, Law, and Policy*, (4th edition), Axelrod, R. et al eds.

*Patt, A. 2017. Beyond the tragedy of the commons: Reframing effective climate change Governance. *Energy Research and Social Science* 34:1-3.

* Iacobuta, G. et al. 2018. National climate change mitigation legislation, strategy and targets: a global update, *Climate Policy*, 18:9, 1114-1132

Prepare for next week climate negotiations exercise: assign teams

Draft topic and brief outline for individual paper due

WEEK EIGHT, Mar 6: International climate policies

*Dupont, C. 2023. Three decades of EU climate policy: Racing toward climate neutrality? *WIREs Climate Change*

* Colgan, J. and M. Hinthorn. 2022. International energy politics in an age of climate change. *Annual Review of Political Science* 26: 79–96.

*Flagg, J. 2018. Carbon neutral by 2021: The past and present of Costa Rica's unusual political tradition. *Sustainability* 10: 296.

* Hochstetler, K. 2021. Climate institutions in Brazil: three decades of building and dismantling climate capacity, *Environmental Politics*, 30: 49-70, DOI: 10.1080/09644016.2021.1957614

In-class exercise: Simulating climate negotiations with C-ROADS

Spring Break – no class Mar 13

WEEK NINE, Mar 20: US climate policy

* Mildenberger, M. 2021. The development of climate institutions in the United States, *Environmental Politics*, 30:sup1.

* Basseches, J. et al. 2022. Climate policy conflict in the U.S. states: a critical review and way forward. *Climatic Change* 170

*Azevedo, I et al. 2020 The paths to Net Zero: How technology can save the planet. *Foreign Affairs*.

*Bistline, J et al. 2023. Emissions and energy impacts of the Inflation Reduction Act. *Science* 380: 1324-1327.

Assignment 5: Bring short summary of one US state's climate action plan to class on Mar 27

WEEK TEN, Mar 27: Non-state actors and policy

* Braungardt, S. et al. 2019. Fossil fuel divestment and climate change: Reviewing contested arguments. *Energy Research & Social Science* 50:191-200.

*Nielsen, K. et al. 2021 The role of high-socioeconomic-status people in locking in or rapidly reducing energy-driven greenhouse gas emissions. *Nature Energy* 6: 1011-1016.

*Fisher, D and S. Nasrin. 2021. Climate activism and its effects. *WIREs Climate Change* 12:e683.

*Nurmis, J. 2016. Visual climate change art 2005–2015: discourse and practice. *WIREs Climate Change* 7: 501–516

Discuss Assignment 5 in class.

WEEK ELEVEN, April 3: Global climate justice & just transitions

Dryzek, J et al. Ch 5 – What's just

*Kashwan, P. 2021. Climate justice in the Global North: An introduction. *Case Studies in the Environment*, 1–13

*Patterson, J. et al. 2017. Political feasibility of 1.5C societal transformations: the role of social justice. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 31: 1–9.

*Schulan, A et al. 2023. Distributive justice and the global emissions budget. *WIREs Climate Change*

*Xaba, N. 2023. Whose just energy transition? A South African perspective. *WIREs Energy and Environment*.

Assignment 6: Find a podcast dealing with a justice related issue, bring summary to class next week April 10.

WEEK TWELVE: Apr 10: Climate adaptation governance

Dryzek, Ch 4 – Actions that promise and actions that fall short (second half)

*Persson, A. 2019. Global adaptation governance: An emerging but contested domain. *WIREs Climate Change*

* Rozenzweig, C and Solecki, W. 2014. Hurricane Sandy and adaptation pathways in New York: Lessons from a first-responder city. *Global Environmental Change* 28: 395–408.

*Shi, L and S. Moser. 2021. Transformative climate adaptation in the United States: Trends and prospects. *Science* 372: 1408

* Filho, W. et al. 2022. The role of indigenous knowledge in climate change adaptation in Africa. *Environmental Science and Policy* 136: 250-260.
Discuss Assignment 6 in class. Start class presentations for a few students.

WEEK THIRTEEN, April 17: Geoengineering governance & negative emissions
Likely no in-person class but pay attention to announcements

* Cusack, D. et al. 2014. An interdisciplinary assessment of climate engineering strategies. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 12: 280-287.

* Lenzi, D. 2018. The ethics of negative emissions. *Global Sustainability* 1, e7: 1–8.

* Sovacool, B et al. 2022. Risk–risk governance in a low-carbon future: Exploring institutional, technological, and behavioral tradeoffs in climate geoengineering pathways. *Risk Analysis* 43:838–859.

* Whyte, K.P. 2018. Indigeneity in geoengineering discourses: Some considerations. *Ethics, Policy & Environment* 21: 289-307

WEEK FOURTEEN: April 24 Wrap up

Dryzek et al. Ch 7 – The anthropocene & Ch 8 – Transition, resilience, and reconstruction

* Harrington, E. and A. Cole. 2022. Typologies of mutual aid in climate resilience: Variation in reciprocity, solidarity, self-determination, and resistance. *Environmental Justice*: 160-169.

Student presentations of final paper

Final papers due May 1