

**STUDIES IN GLOBAL POLITICAL ECONOMY
CLIMATE CHANGE
POLSCI 4NN3
Winter 2022, Term 2**

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Course Description

This course examines the relationship between the global political economy and climate change. It considers the emerging political responses that aim to reduce global carbon emissions and the interpretation of the climate problem from an economics standpoint. The key issues that will be considered throughout the course are theories of environmental problems, political responses and economists' neglect of climate change, capitalism, consumption, North-South debates, varieties of environmentalism, climate policies, solutions and the future of the climate politics.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Develop a critical understanding of the key debates on the global political economy of climate change.
- Pursue one climate change topic in depth through an independent research paper, critical response paper and the final examination on relevant topics discussed in class.
- Demonstrate argumentation and critical thinking skills by leading seminars and class participation.

Required Materials and Texts

There is no textbook for this course. The required readings are listed in the course schedule below that will consist of 3-5 journal articles and book chapters each week. Some weeks also include a film, YouTube video, and newspaper op-ed. The links for these resources are provided within the reading citation. Other reading material will be available through the McMaster library website and the course page on Avenue to Learn (A2L). Completing the required readings before class is an important element of your participation mark and in preparation for the final exam.

Class Format

All students will be expected to submit a weekly reading summary on A2L before each week's seminar. This document will contain:

1. A list of key concepts and terms.
2. A bullet point summary of the readings' core arguments with page numbers and citations wherever applicable. This should be written in your own words and not lifted directly from the text(s).
3. A short 200-300-word discussion of how the texts relate to other readings discussed in class.
4. Two questions that you would like to see discussed in class.

Ten summaries are required during the course and each one will be worth one mark. Students will be expected to be active participants in class discussions. This involves leading discussions, highlighting points from the readings, engaging with the arguments of the texts, offering criticism of what you have read and asking questions about the text. Talking for the sake of talking or making irrelevant points does not contribute to your participation grade.

Each week the seminar will be led by one or two students. Their job is to facilitate discussion. Discussion should revolve around the concepts and arguments put forth in the academic articles. **Note:** Students are being asked to facilitate discussion NOT give presentations. You can use questions, videos, online quizzes, or other tools to facilitate discussion, but you should not be giving a presentation.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Seminar Participation (30%), over the course of the term
2. Critical Response Paper (15%), over the course of the term
3. Research Paper (30%), due March 14, 2022
4. Final take-home exam (25%), due April 20, 2022

Item	Due Date	Percentage of Final Grade
Seminar Participation	Over the course of the term	30%
Critical Response Paper	Over the course of the term	15%
Research Paper	March 14, 2022	30%
Final examination	April 20, 2022	25%

Course Evaluation – Details

NOTE: All assignments should include a separate cover page with your name, student number, and assignment title as well as a separate page at the end for your bibliography. All assignments should be double-spaced and in 12-point font. You can work with MLA, APA, or Chicago Manual of Style citation method. Whichever style you use it is essential to be consistent with that method throughout your paper, to include page number and author name information for all direct quotes and paraphrased ideas from sources, and to include a bibliography/works cited.

Seminar Participation – due throughout the course of the term (30%)

The cumulative participation grade covers:

- I. Leading discussions (10%): see below for further information.
- II. Participation in seminar discussions (10%): participation grade will come from an evaluation of how much a given class member contributed to the seminar. This includes initiating topics/questions, offering positive/critical reactions or responses, synthesizing, or summarizing part of the discussion and providing examples.
- III. Weekly summary statements (10%): These will be prepared for each of the assigned readings starting week 2 and hence 10 submissions in total for the entire semester. You are allowed to skip one week of your choice, but this needs to be notified to the course instructor a week in advance. To receive credit, these summaries must be submitted on A2L prior to the class i.e., midnight before class.

Critical Response Paper - due throughout the course of the term (15%)

Write a short critical analytical paper that is a reaction/response to any of the weekly readings of your choice. This entails selecting any one of the weekly readings to write a critical response on. Post selection, the student will have one week to complete their paper. For instance, if someone chooses to write a paper on Week 4's reading, the critical response paper will be due in class the following week i.e., Week 5. The minimum word count for this assignment is 1200 words and the maximum is 1400 words. Anything submitted beyond this range, or which inaccurately represents the word count will be subject to 2% deduction (meaning if the grade is 85%, it will be reduced to 83%).

Research Paper - due March 14, 2022 (30%)

You are challenged to develop your own research question — in close cooperation with me. You may choose a topic of interest associated with the political economy of climate change. The research question can be of theoretical or empirical nature. An excellent essay demonstrates detailed knowledge of the readings and uses this knowledge in novel, insightful and creative ways. Research papers should be a minimum of 10 pages and a maximum of 11 pages excluding bibliography. Anything submitted beyond this range, or which inaccurately represents the word count will be subject to 2% deduction (meaning if the grade is 85%, it will be reduced to 83%).

Final Take-Home Exam – due April 20, 2022 (25%)

A take-home examination will be made available on A2L on April 13th, 2022. It will compose of 5 essay questions out of which you will be required to answer any two of your choice (in 1000-1500 words each). Questions will cover broad themes from the course readings and seminar discussions. Students will have 7 days to complete the exam and submit to the drop box on A2L by 10pm on April 20, 2022. Late exams will not be accepted.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (Jan 10) Introduction

Topic: Introduction

Course introduction, review of course requirements and student/instructor expectations and interests.

Week 2 (Jan 17) Theories and Climate Change

Topic: International Relations Theories and Climate Change

- Clapp, Jennifer, and Peter Dauvergne. 'Peril or Prosperity? Mapping Worldviews of Global Environmental Change.' *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment* 2nd edition (2011): 1-16.
- Steven Bernstein, 'Liberal Environmentalism and Global Environmental Governance' *Global Environmental Politics* Vol. 2:3 (August 2002), pp. 1-16.

- Stephen M. Gardiner, 'A Perfect Moral Storm: Climate Change, Intergenerational Ethics and the Problem of Moral Corruption,' *Environmental Values* Vol. 15:3 (August 2006), pp. 397-413.

Week 3 (Jan 24) Contradictions

Topic: Contradictions within Climate Politics

- Matto Mildenberger. 2020. *Carbon Captured. How Business and Labor Control Climate Politics*. Cambridge: The MIT Press. Ch.1, 4, 5 'The Puzzle of Climate Policy Action,' 'The Logic of Double Representation,' 'US Climate Policy Inaction,' 1-38, 99-124.

Week 4 (Jan 31) Climate Models

Topic: Economic ideas in Climate Models

- William D. Nordhaus. 2018. Lecture in Economic Sciences 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1RkSuAs03Q&pbjreload=101> (lecture, 30 minutes)
- Nicolas Stern, "Chapters 3: Policies for Dynamic Change and Transition", *Why Are We Waiting? The Logic, Urgency and Promise of Tackling Climate Change* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015), pp. 33-185.
- Gernot Wagner and Martin L. Weitzman. 2015. *Climate Shock. The Economic Consequences of a Hotter Planet*. Chapter 1, '911' 'Fat Tails'. 1-14, 48-65.

Week 5 (Feb 7) Capitalism Conundrum

Topic: Capitalism Conundrum

- Klein, Naomi. 'Introduction,' 'The Right is Right: The Revolutionary Power of Climate Change'. *This changes everything: Capitalism vs. the climate*. Simon and Schuster, 2015.
- Naomi Klien. Ian Angus. 'Capital's Time vs Nature's Time,' 'We Are not All in This Together,' *Facing the Anthropocene: Fossil Capitalism and the Crisis of the Earth System.*' 2016. 111-125, 175-189.
- Hickel, Jason. 2019. "Is It Possible to Achieve a Good Life for All within Planetary Boundaries?" *Third World Quarterly* 40 (1): 18–35.

Week 6 (Feb 14) Problem of Consumption

Topic: The Problem of Consumption

- Peter Dauvergne, "Conclusion: The Allure and Illusion of Riches" *Environmentalism of the Rich* (Cambridge; MIT Press, 2016), pp. 139-152.
- Peter Dauvergne, "An Unbalanced Global Political Economy" *The Shadows of Consumption: Consequences for the Global Environment* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010), pp. 3-17.

- Brooks, Andrew, and Raymond Bryant. 'Consumption.' In *Critical Environmental Politics* (2013): Chapter 8, 72-82.
- Thomans Princen, Michael Miniates, Ken Conca, eds., "Conclusion: to confront consumption" *Confronting Consumption* (MIT Press), pp. 317-328.

Week 7 (Feb 21) Mid-term recess, NO CLASS

Week 8 (Feb 28) Climate Change Denial

Topic: Climate Change Denial

- Film: Merchants of Doubt (Directed by Robert Kenner) 2014. Available in McMaster Library Catalogue.
- McCright, Aaron M., and Riley E. Dunlap. 2011. "Cool Dudes: The Denial of Climate Change among Conservative White Males in the United States." *Global Environmental Change* 21 (4): 1163–72.

Week 9 (Mar 7) Global North-South Debates

Topic: Global North-South Debates

- Goldfield, Eleanor. "There is no such thing as a 'green' war." *Roar Magazine* (2019). <https://roarmag.org/essays/there-is-no-such-thing-as-a-green-war/>
- Lukacs, Martin. "Neoliberalism has conned us into fighting climate change as individuals." *The Guardian* 17 (2017): 17.
- Agarwal, Anil, and Sunita Narain. "Global warming in an unequal world: A case of environmental colonialism (selected excerpts)." In *Handbook of Climate Change and India*, pp. 105-112. Routledge, 2012.
- Paterson, Matthew. "International justice and global warming." In *The ethical dimensions of global change*, pp. 181-201. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 1996.

Week 10 (Mar 14) Transnational Advocacies & Varieties of Environmentalism

Topic: Transnational Advocacies and Varieties of Environmentalism

- Matejova, Miriam, Stefan Parker, and Peter Dauvergne. "The politics of repressing environmentalists as agents of foreign influence." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 72, no. 2 (2018): 145-162.
- Banks, Nicola, David Hulme, and Michael Edwards. "NGOs, states, and donors revisited: Still too close for comfort?" *World Development* 66 (2015): 707-718. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305750X14002939>
- Guha, Ramachandra, and Joan Martínez Alier. "Chapter 1: Environmentalism of the Poor" *Varieties of environmentalism: essays North and South*. Routledge, 1998.
- Sharma, Mukul. "Eco-casteism". *Caste and nature: Dalits and Indian Environmental Policies*. Oxford University Press, 2017.

NOTES: Research Paper Due

Week 11 (Mar 21) Climate Policies

Topic: Climate Policies in the US, EU, China and India: Successes or Failures

- Matto Mildenberger. 2020. *Carbon Captured. How Business and Labor Control Climate Politics*. Cambridge: The MIT Press. 'US Climate Policy Action,' 125-160.
- Paterson, Matthew. 2012. "Who and What Are Carbon Markets for? Politics and the Development of Climate Policy." *Climate Policy* 12 (1): 82–97.
- Green, Jessica F. 2017. "Don't Link Carbon Markets." *Nature News* 543 (7646): 484. <https://www.nature.com/articles/543484a>
- Van der Kamp, Denise S. "Blunt force regulation and bureaucratic control: Understanding China's war on pollution." *Governance* 34, no. 1 (2021): 191-209.
- Nina Kelsey and John Zysman. 2013. "Green Spiral" and "India" In: *Can Green Sustain Growth?* John Zysman and Mark Humphrey. Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA: 79-88; 128-243.

Week 12 (Mar 28) Climate Solutions

Topic: Climate Solutions

- William Nordhaus. 2015. Climate Casino. 'The Central Role of Carbon Pricing,' 'Public Opinion and Climate Change' 220-232, 302-315.
- Wagner, Gernot, and Richard J. Zeckhauser. 2012. "Climate Policy: Hard Problem, Soft Thinking." *Climatic Change* 110 (3): 507–21.
- Robinson Meyer. 2019. A Centuries-Old Idea Could Revolutionize Climate Policy. *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2019/02/green-new-deal-economic-principles/582943/>
- Mildenberger, Matto, and Leah C. Stokes. 2020. "The Trouble with Carbon Pricing." Text. *Boston Review*. September 23, 2020. <https://bostonreview.net/science-nature-politics/matto-mildenberger-leah-c-stokes-trouble-carbon-pricing>
- Ian Angus. 2016. *Facing the Anthropocene. Fossil Capitalism and the Crisis of the Earth System*. 'Ecosocialism and Human Solidarity' 189-211

Week 13 (Apr 4) Future of Climate Politics

Topic: The Future of Climate Politics

- Tooze, Adam. 2020. "Welcome to the Final Battle for the Climate." *Foreign Policy* (blog). 2020. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/10/17/great-power-competition-climate-china-europe-japan/>.
- David Wallace-Wells. 2019. "The Cautious Case for Climate Optimism." *Intelligencer*. <http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2019/02/book-excerpt-the-uninhabitable-earth-david-wallace-wells.html>
- Bazilian, Morgan, Michael Bradshaw, Johannes Gabriel, Andreas Goldthau, and Kirsten Westphal. 2020. "Four Scenarios of the Energy Transition: Drivers,

Consequences, and Implications for Geopolitics.” *WIREs Climate Change* 11 (2): e625. <https://wires.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/wcc.625>

Week 14 Monday April 11, 2022

- **Course wrap up**

Note: final take-home exam, due April 20, 2022

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted to the appropriate assignments folder in A2L by 10pm on the day they are due.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Late papers and other marked assignments will be penalised at the rate of 3% per day (including weekends), except in the most extenuating of circumstances.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

Courses With An On-Line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used.

Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster

account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

APPENDIX A: Leading Discussion

The leader of the discussion should use this principle in calling upon class members to speak:

- Given the relatively large size of the seminar and the short times available for discussing a reading, facilitators should ensure that every member of class wishing to make a statement is heard before a member who has already made a statement on the given topic is asked to speak again. Use this rule in each of the discussions of concepts, main argument, other questions, and strengths and weaknesses of the reading.

The leader of the discussion should begin with the following questions:

These are the several key concepts and terms that I noticed in the reading such as . . . Are any of these unclear to any of you? Are there any other key concepts that you noted that need to be clarified? (If one or more are unclear) Can anyone help us clarify the meaning of <problematic concept(s)>.

Advice: try to keep this part of the seminar to about 10 minutes. Use your discretion here. If a concept or term brought up is interesting but not central to the reading, then suggest that we come back to it if we have time. If a concept is integral to the argument (see below), you can reserve its discussion for when we get to the next step.

2. Would any member of the class like to give us their statement on what the main argument of the author is? Would anyone like to add something to what <the first person> has said? Do you agree or disagree that we have captured the key aspects of the argument?

Advice: Try to avoid starting off with your own statement of the argument. See if you can draw it out from members of the class first. You can add some of your own understanding as the argument proceeds. As you see the discussion being finished or beginning to get into key issues arising from the argument, move to the third step.

I would like now to identify some of the key issues that arise out of the reading and that we might discuss. One of these might be . . . Are there any others that we might take up?

Advice: Your goal here is to get as many key issues discussed as is possible. Try to draw in members of the class who have not had a chance to speak. The aim here is to improve understanding of the reading, not to criticize it. If members move to critique, stop them and say we will do that soon. Keep an eye on your watch or the clock. You want to reserve time for a critical discussion of the reading.

4. With our understanding of the argument and the various issues related to the argument, we can now spend a few minutes to reflect critically on the reading. Are there any points that are particularly problematic in your understanding? Are there any points that are particularly useful or persuasive?

Advice: It is important here to ensure that members of the seminar get a chance to comment on both the weaknesses and the strengths of the given reading. Don't just concentrate on the weaknesses.