

SYLLABUS

Climate Change Ethics and Policy NRSM 449E

Course Information:

- Autumn 2017
- MWF, 12:00-12:50
- RM: Forestry 301
- Instructor: Dane Scott
- Office: Mansfield Center, MLIB 464
- Phone: 243-6632
- Email: dane.scott@mso.umt.edu
- Office hours: MW 2:00-3:00

Course Objectives:

Students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of various concepts and theories of justice
- Demonstrate a depth of knowledge of the important roles ethics and moral philosophy play in shaping climate change policies

Texts:

- Michael Sandel, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?*
- Additional readings will be linked and posted on the course Moodle page

Tests & Assignments:

- Participation (Quizzes, Short Writing Assignments & Attendance): 20 pts
- Essay #1: 20 pts
- Essay #2: 20 pts
- Exam #1: 20 pts
- Exam #2: 20 pts

Schedule:

Part I: The Ethical Contours of the Climate Debate

Week 1

- 9/1: Course Introduction

Week 2

- 9/4 Labor Day, No Class
- 9/6: Video: Frontline, "Climate of Doubt"
- 9/8: Naomi Klein, "Capitalism vs. the Climate"

Week 3:

- 9/11: Freeman Dyson, "Interview with Freeman Dyson, Reluctant Global Warming Skeptic" (Moodle)
- 9/13: Mann, "How to Talk About Climate Change so People Will Listen" (Moodle)
- 9/15: Paul Sabin, "Betting on the Apocalypse" (Moodle)

Week 4:

- 9/18: Mark Sagoff, “Do We Consume Too Much” (Moodle)
- 9/20: Podcast: On Being: “The Moral Math of Climate Change” (Moodle)
- Bill McKibben, “A Moral Atmosphere” (Moodle)
- 9/21: *Last day to drop, add, or make registration changes on CyberBear*
- 9/22: Pascal Bruckner, “Against Environmental Panic” (Moodle)
- **Essay #1 Assigned, Due 9/29**

Week 5

- 9/25: William Nordhaus, “Why the Global Warming Skeptics are Wrong” (Moodle)
- William Nordhaus, “What Will Climate Change do to the Economy?” (Moodle)
- Bill McKibben, Why We Need a Carbon Tax, And Why it Won’t Be Enough” (Moodle)
- 9/27: David Keith, “Engineering the Planet”
- 9/29: The Paris Agreement, readings TBA (Moodle)
- **Essay #1, Due**

Week 6

- 10/2: The President’s (Obama’s) Climate Action Plan” (Moodle)
- Vox, “Obama’s Climate Plan Explained” (Moodle)
- 10/2: *Autumn graduation app deadline w/ late fee*
- 10/4: “An America First Energy Plan” (Moodle)
- Additional Readings TBA (Moodle)
- 10/6: Pearce, et al., “Beyond Counting Climate Consensus” (Moodle)

Week 7

- **10/9: Exam #1**

Part II: Moral Philosophy and Climate Change

- 10/11: Sandel, Chapter 1, “Do the Right Thing”
- 10/13: Sandel, Chapter 2, “The Greatest Happiness Principle / Utilitarianism”

Week 8

- 10/16: Singer, “The Ethics of Climate Change” (In class video)
- 10/18: Singer, “One Atmosphere”(Moodle)
- 10/20: Sandel, Chapter 3, “Do We Own Ourselves / Libertarianism”

Week 9

- 10/23: Sandel, Chapter 4, “Hired Help / Markets and Morals”
- 10/25: Adler, “A Conservative’s Approach to Combating Climate Change” (Moodle)
- 10/27: Sandel, Chapter 5, “What Matters is the Motive / Immanuel Kant”
- 10/27: *Spring graduation apps due*

Week 10

- 10/30: Sandel, Chapter 6, “The Case for Equity / John Rawls”
- 11/1: Hayward, “Climate Change and Ethics” (Moodle)
- 11/3: Caney, “Climate Change, Human Rights and Moral Thresholds” (Moodle)

Week 11

- 11/6: Sandel, Chapter 8, "Who Deserves What? / Aristotle"
- 11/8: Mike Hulme, “Climate Change and Virtue: An Apologetic” (Moodle)

- 11/10: Veterans Day, No Class

Week 12

- 11/13: Sen, “Global Warming is Just One of Many Environmental Threats that Demands Our Attention” (Moodle)
- 11/15: Holland, “Justice and the Environment in Nussbaum’s Capabilities Approach” (Moodle)
- 11/17: Rockstrom et al. “Planetary Boundaries: Exploring the Safe Operating Space for Humanity

Week 13

- **11/20: Exam #2**
- 11/22: Thanksgiving Holiday, No Class
- 11/24: Thanksgiving Holiday, No Class

Part III, Current Ethical Issue on Climate Change

Week 14

- 11/27: Steffen, et al. “The Anthropocene: From Global Change to Planetary Stewardship” (Moodle)
- 11/29: Bob Massie, “Why American Universities Must Divest from Fossil Fuel Companies” (Moodle)
Robert Satvins, “Divestment is No Substitute for Real Climate Action” (Moodle)
- 12/1: Class Debate over UM Divestment

Week 15

- 12/4: Minter & Collins, “Move It or Lose It” (Moodle)
- 12/6: Reading on Biotechnology and Climate Change TBA (Moodle)
- 12/8: Reading on Geoengineering and Climate Change TBA (Moodle)
- **Essay #2, Assigned, Due No later than 12/18, 5:00 PM**

Week 16

- 12/11: Reading on Geoengineering and Climate Change TBA (Moodle)

UM Policies

- Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction for students with disabilities in collaboration with instructors and Disability Services for Students, which is located in Lommasson Center 154. The University does not permit fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications.
- All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#).