

NRSM 326 Climate and Society

Fall 2020

Instructor: Laurie Yung

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In-person office hours: Thursdays 4-5:00 (Under the tent just north of CHCB/Clapp)

Zoom office hours: Wednesdays 4-5:00 ([Zoom link](#))

Outdoor Classroom Above North Underground Lecture Hall

This course will meet outdoors unless students are notified otherwise. Please be sure to dress warmly and bring a jacket/hat as we move into the fall. I will send an email if we need to move indoors at some point. Note that students who wish to participate remotely can join the Zoom discussion group at any time. The alternate/indoor location for this course is NAC 011.

Course Description

This course examines the relationship between climate and society, with a focus on interactions across scales and different dimensions of society. The course draws on a range of social science disciplines to explain social vulnerability, the politics of climate change, communication and behavior change, adaptation and land management, and systems and transformations. The goal of the course is to advance student understanding of climate change as a complex problem and the ways in which social science insights can contribute to solutions.

Course Objectives

Students in this course will:

1. Understand the core social and political components of climate change, and how to use that knowledge to advance effective communication, mitigation, adaptation, and transformation.
2. Learn how to apply key insights from social science to the problem of climate change.
3. Improve writing, speaking, and analytical skills.

Course Modality and Structure

This course is taught in a blended/hybrid modality. Many of the course materials (e.g. readings, recorded lectures, other videos) are provided online, asynchronously. However, the discussion groups are synchronous and either in-person or via Zoom (depending on student preference). Exams will be via Moodle during class time. Thus, it is essential that students are available for class MWF 1-1:50, even if some weeks they are only required to attend class one of those days. Please see the schedule below and mark your calendar with due dates and exam dates. While the readings and online components of the course can be completed when it is convenient for the student within a particular week, students need to keep up with the course materials in order to (1) receive points for reflections and responses, (2) adequately prepare for weekly discussion groups, AND (3) be ready for each exam.

Discussion Groups

Students will attend one discussion group each week (except during exam weeks, when there will be exam Q and A sessions via Zoom). Students who are attending in person will be assigned

to the Monday 1-1:50 or Wednesday 1-1:50 groups; students attending via Zoom will be assigned to the Friday 1-1:50 group. Students who are attending in person CANNOT switch to the other in person session (e.g. if you are in the Monday group, you cannot attend on Wednesday). Similarly, students who are assigned to the Zoom group CANNOT switch to an in person session. However, any student can choose to join the Zoom session for any reason, at any time. For example, if you are feeling sick that week, you have to quarantine because you are a close contact, or you are uncomfortable attending in person, you can always choose to join the Friday Zoom session (no prior permission needed). Participation in discussion groups is required and counts toward your grade for the course. Students who miss discussion groups will have the opportunity to complete a substantial make-up assignment (probably a short paper). In cases where students have family or medical emergencies, I will make alternative arrangements to accommodate the student on a case-by-case basis. Please see expanded attendance policy below.

Course Readings and Videos

Readings

Required Course textbook: Leichenko, R. and K. O'Brien. (2019) *Climate and Society: Transforming the Future*. Polity Press. Cambridge, U.K.

Additional course readings will be available on Moodle/UMOnline.

Videos

Recorded lectures and other video media will be available on Moodle/UMOnline.

You will need to pay \$3.99 to rent the film *The Age of Consequences* on Amazon.

The readings and videos related to weekly discussion groups must be completed prior to your weekly class meeting. To adequately prepare for class, students need to read/watch this material with the discussion question(s) for that week in mind, taking notes to prepare for class. Students should be familiar with the “facts” outlined in the readings and videos (who, what, when, where, how, etc.) and carefully analyze and critique the material presented. As you are reading and watching, make notes related to the discussion question(s) as well as key points, questions you have, interesting issues raised, and connections to other topics being covered in the course.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (8.19-21) Climate Change as a Complex Problem

Week 2 (8.24-28) The Social Impacts of Climate Change

Week 3 (8.31-9.4) Understanding Vulnerability

Week 4 (9.8-9.11) Public Views of Climate Change

9.11 Paper/Presentation Topics Due

9.11 Monday discussion group meets Friday this week

Week 5 (9.14-9.18) The Politics of Climate Change

Week 6 (9.21-2.25) Climate Communications I

9.21 Exam Q and A via Zoom (optional but highly recommended)

9.23 Exam #1 via Moodle

9.25 Presentation Q and A via Zoom (optional but highly recommended)

Week 7 (9.28-10.2) Climate Communications II

Week 8 (10.5-10.9) Mitigation and Behavior Change

10.7 Presentations Due

Week 9 (10.12-10.16) Mitigation and System Change

10.14 Peer Feedback on Presentations Due

Week 10 (10.19-10.23) Adaptation on Public Lands

10.19 Exam Q and A via Zoom (optional but highly recommended)

10.21 Exam #2 via Moodle

10.23 Paper Q and A via Zoom (optional but highly recommended)

Week 11 (10.26-10.30) Local and Tribal Adaptation

10.30 Draft paper due for feedback (required)

Week 12 (11.2-11.6) Climate and Agriculture

Week 13 (11.9-11.13) Transitions and Technologies

11.13 Revised Papers Due

Week 14 (11.16-11.18) Social Transformations

11.16 Exam Q and A via Zoom (optional but highly recommended)

11.18 Exam Q and A via Zoom (optional but highly recommended)

11.19 1:10-2:00 Exam #3 (note that this is a Thursday)

Evaluation

Assignment	Percentage of Final Grade	Due Date
Attendance/participation	10%	Ongoing
Reflections/responses	18%	Ongoing
Paper Topic Due	2%	9/11
Exam #1	10%	9/23
Presentation	15%	10/7
Draft Paper Due	Not graded but lose points if fail to submit	10/30
Exam #2	10%	10/21
Final Paper Due	25%	11/13
Exam #3	10%	11/19

All assignments should be submitted via Moodle.

Presentation and Paper

Students are required to create a 3-minute video presentation and write a 5-page paper on a topic of their choice related to climate and society. Students will submit paper topics for review and approval by 9/11. Presentations are due on 10/7. Draft papers are due on 10/30 (Draft papers will not be graded but will receive feedback and suggestions for improvements. Students will have 5% of their total course grade deducted if they do not turn in a draft paper by the deadline.). Final papers are due 11/13. A detailed description of these assignments will be posted on Moodle.

Exams

There will be three exams (none are cumulative). Instructors will make every effort possible to post study guide questions each week to help students prepare for the exam. Exam questions will be almost entirely pulled from the large bank of study guide questions. Exams will be taken remotely via Moodle on 9/23 (1-1:50), 10/21 (1-1:50), and 11/19 (1:10-2). Students must take the exams at those dates and times (except in cases of a family or medical emergency, or other extenuating circumstances).

Reflections and Responses

Throughout the course, students will be required to respond to some of the readings, lectures, and videos by providing short reflections in Moodle. When reflections are required, there will be a question following a specific reading, lecture, or video and a target length will be provided

(e.g. 3-5 sentences). Students will also be asked to provide feedback on three other student video presentations. Please note that these reflections must be completed by the end of the week for each topic.

Participation and Attendance

PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY! **You are required to attend a discussion group every week (either your assigned in-person group or the Zoom session), for a total of ten sessions this fall. Because there are only ten sessions it is critical that you not miss class unless absolutely necessary.** Participation grades will be based on attendance, punctuality, coming to class prepared, and active engagement during discussion groups. Attendance will be taken at every class. As mentioned above, students who miss discussion groups will have the opportunity to complete a substantial make-up assignment (probably a short paper). More than two unexcused absences with no make-up assignments will result in a zero in participation (and thus a 10% reduction in the student's final grade). More than four unexcused absences will automatically result in an F in the course, with no options to do make-up assignments.

In cases where students have family or medical emergencies, or other legitimate reasons for missing class, I will make alternative arrangements to accommodate the student on a case-by-case basis. Please communicate with me if something is interfering with your attendance so we can troubleshoot! I am very happy to work with students who are experiencing difficult circumstances.

Late Assignments

Points will be deducted for late reflections, presentations, and papers (the later you turn them in, the more points you will lose), but please note that better late than never definitely applies (i.e. it's better to get some credit for an assignment rather than none at all). If you have a family or medical emergency, or another legitimate reason to submit assignments late, please talk with me as soon as possible. Please reach out if you are finding it difficult to keep up! I will take your circumstances into account and we can make alternative arrangements, but please know that I may ask for documentation.

Grading Scale

Final course grades will be determined based on the following scale:

93-100 A
90-92 A-
88-89 B+
83-87 B
80-82 B-
78-79 C+
73-77 C
70-72 C-
68-69 D+
63-67 D
60-62 D-
59- F

COVID Policies

Rules and Expectations

Masks are required for this course, indoors and outdoors. Wearing masks will decrease the risk of COVID transmission and create a learning environment where everyone feels as safe as possible. Mask use in this class will follow the dynamic CDC guidelines for the wearing of masks, including the types and materials of masks. You are asked to wear a mask that falls within these guidelines, such as the mask provided by the University at the start of the semester, and fit it properly to your face. You can find updated CDC guidelines at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>. If you choose to wear a buff-style face covering, you will need to make sure that it is doubled-up. Masks with filters will not be allowed. There is no eating or drinking allowed during class, since this would necessitate the removal of masks.

Because the risk of transmission is much lower outside, we will meet outdoors for as long as possible. When we are in the outdoor classroom you may remove your mask when you speak during the discussion, if you would like to do so. However, when you are not speaking, you need to have your mask on.

In the outdoor classroom, where the chairs are not fixed, you are responsible for ensuring that your chair is at least six feet from the nearest person.

Seats will be assigned and attendance will be taken for the purposes of contact tracing.

Please clean your chair/space when you arrive and when you depart.

Please stay home if you are feeling sick at all. You can always join the Zoom discussion group on Friday so that you are able to participate and do not lose points for missing class.

And please let me know if you feel unsafe or uncomfortable at any time!

Transitioning to Remote

If University of Montana transitions to all remote learning, we will simply transition the discussion groups to Zoom. If that happens and you need access to a laptop or internet service, please let me know and I will do everything I can to help you secure it.

Childcare and K-12 Schools

If childcare facilities and/or K-12 schools shut down and this impacts your ability to participate in the course or to turn assignments in on time, please let me know and we will come up with an alternative schedule for you.

Other Course Policies

Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and wish to request reasonable accommodations for this course, please contact me privately to discuss the specific modifications. Please be advised, I may request that you provide a verification letter from Disability Services for Students. If you have not yet registered with Disability Services, located in Lommasson Center 154, please do so in order to coordinate your reasonable modifications. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at [Disabilities Webpage Link](#).

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

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](#). Please be aware that plagiarism is a violation of the student conduct code and will not be tolerated in this course. If a student plagiarizes, their course grade will be impacted and the UM Dean of Students will be notified. If you aren't entirely certain what constitutes plagiarism is, please see these excellent resources:

[Plagiarism Web Link](#)

[Writing Center Link](#)

[Owl English Purdue Link](#)

[Owl English Purdue Resource Link](#)

Grading Option

Please note that this class is offered for traditional letter grade only; it is not offered under the credit/no credit option.

Important Dates Restricting Opportunities to Drop a Course Fall 2020

Deadline	Description	Date
To 15 th instructional day	Students can drop classes on CyberBear with refund & no "W" on Transcript	September 9, @5 PM
16 th to 45 th instructional day	A class drop requires a form with instructor and advisor signature, a \$10 fee from registrar's office, student will receive a 'W' on transcript, no refund.	September 10 – October 21 @5 PM
Beginning 46 th instructional day	If possible, students should drop courses by the 45th instructional day! Drops after the 45 th instructional day require instructor's, advisor's, and Dean's approval. A \$10 fee applies. A 'WP' or 'WF' will appear on your transcript. No refunds.	October 22 – November 18 @5 PM