

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SOCIETY

Time: Thursday 9:10am-12:10pm
Location: Sociology Building 203
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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course examines the social, economic, political, and ethical aspects of climate change, with a focus on both domestic and international processes and case studies. Students will explore social aspects of climate change at multiple scales, from individual behavior to global governance. We will examine the causes, responses, and policy options to address climate change. We will also pay special attention on situations in Taiwan and China, as they may be of students' concerns.

In this course, you will need to examine your own experiences and observations, and you may need to be open, as assumptions about our society are challenged by sociological data and analysis. Doing this enables you to develop a more sophisticated understanding of your social world and, thus, yourself. I will also help to develop writing skills, careful reading, and critical thinking abilities that will be useful in your research career and beyond.

COURSE REQUIREMENT

Climate Change News Time	10%
Participation	20%
Weekly Intellectual Journal	30%
Final Paper and Presentation	40%

Climate Change News Time (10%)

This course is organized by various actors (state, market, media, civil society, etc.) and concepts (risk perception, environmental justice, etc.) related to climate change. This arrangement, inevitably, leaves us less time to delve deeply into substantive topics about climate change that you care deeply about. To complement this arrangement, students will take turns to present current news of climate change. You will use **3 slides** (no more or less) to speak about **10 minutes** to introduce a specific issue about climate change. You can choose a specific event or policy, such as the Fridays for Future or the Divestment campaign, or broader subjects such as climate refugees, emission trading programs, climate change fictions. We will figure out the presentation topics and schedule in the very beginning of the semester. The first presentation will be on March 12th.

Participation (20%)

I will run this course mostly as a seminar, supplemented by my short lectures to set up the stage. We will spend much of our class time carefully dissecting and analyzing the readings, and tackling important conceptual questions and real-world policy issues. To accomplish these aims, your consistent presence and careful preparation is essential for your individual success, as well as the success of the course. I expect students to be prepared and engaged in every class meeting.

The quality of our collective learning experience depends on your participation. Your grade for class participation will not be a measure of how loud you were, or of how often you spoke. Rather, it will be based on my subjective assessment of your engagement in the class. To do well in this class, you should come to class having already read the assigned reading and be ready to contribute to the

discussion. As you are preparing for class, you should get into the habit of taking careful notes on the readings and, in advance, you should spend time thinking about the readings or talking about them with a classmate to develop some initial reactions.

I strive to create a learning community in the classroom. In this course, you will be in a “learning group” of 3 or 4 students, who are expected to read each other’s intellectual journal entries before class and to talk about them. Our class meetings will begin with a conversation of the learning groups, who will afterwards bring issues for discussion forward to the entire class. In some class meetings, students will also discuss each other’s writing project. We will periodically re-organize into new learning groups over the course of the semester.

You have to attend the class to participate. I will exercise attendance checks regularly. You are allowed to be absent without any reason **once**. If you are late to the class by more than 10 minutes, you will be considered absent for the day.

Weekly Intellectual Journals (30%)

The point of the weekly intellectual journal is to give you a chance to develop your own views on the course readings, to communicate those views to the class, to demonstrate your command of what we’ve read thus far, and to keep you up-to-date with the material in the course. The format is simple: Write a critical appraisal of around **300-500 words** (longer is just fine; shorter is not) of some particular theme in the week’s readings, and email the result the class (cc Professor Liu) by **Wednesday 4pm**. Please also upload a copy of your journal.

In some weeks, I will provide you with a prompting question that you should address in your intellectual journal. It is important to develop one theme or argument, rather than a scatter of observations. Also, it is important to *document* your theme or argument and to explain your *reasoning*, rather than offering opinion.

There will be 8 weekly entries in total (week 2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13).

Final Writing Project (40%)

Each student will write a final paper on a topic related to climate change, broadly construed. The length should be at least 3,000 words. While I want to give you much flexibility to decide what and how you should write, I strongly suggest your write in one of the following formats.

Public Scholarship: a writing piece scientifically informed but oriented to a public audience. You can prepare your work following the [submission guideline](#) to *Contexts*—American Sociological Association’s generalist interest magazine.

“Our feature articles are written for a broad audience and are cleanly and clearly written, with no jargon, footnotes, or citations. They have much in common with the best of long-form journalism: They’re empirically and theoretically driven storytelling, teach readers new stuff, and they help us think differently about the world. Basically, they make you go, “Huh. That’s pretty cool. I never really thought of that.”

If your topic is about Taiwan, I encourage to craft your writing to be sent to outlets such as the CommonWealth magazine or the NewsLens, both of which welcome English-language commentaries.

Literature Review: review academic literature on a given area of your interests. You can follow examples from journals such as *Journal of Environmental Sciences and Studies*, *Society and Natural Resources*, *Wiley Reviews*, and *Sociology Compass*. I encourage doctoral students to choose this option.

I would like to work with each of you to figure out a topic that is interesting and useful for your own pursuit. In the beginning of the semester, students are required to meet with me individually on April 30th regarding your paper topic and possible publication platforms. Throughout the semester, we will work in groups to make progress on this writing assignment. You will present your paper during week 15 and 16.

COURSE RULES

Office Hour

I enjoy talking to students and I encourage you to stop by my office. You can make an appointment with me either in class or send me an email. Office hours will not be devoted to tutorial for materials that students miss when not attending class. Also, please strive to ask routine questions of clarification in class.

Email Policies

The primary mode of communication for this course will be email. Please check your NTU email regularly. I will send course-related information to you at least 24 hours in advance of any deadlines. I will likewise respond to your emails within 24 hours.

Academic Honesty

I take academic honesty very seriously. All of the work that you submit for this class must be your own work, and you are required to quote and cite all references properly. Although this appears straightforward, it can sometimes be confusing. Wherever you are unsure about quoting and citing, I am happy to help you figure out the best strategy.

Changes to the syllabus

The syllabus is a guide for the course and your learning is my top priority. If the course requires any changes, I will post a revised syllabus and inform the class of any changes.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Week 1 (3/5): Course Introduction and Environmental Sociology

- The Syllabus

Week 2 (3/12): Introduction to Environmental Sociology

- Finish the EcoType Survey
- Liu, John Chung-En "Saving the Environment" in *Sociology in Action*
- Maniates, Michael F. "Individualization: Plant a tree, buy a bike, save the world?." *Global environmental politics* 1.3 (2001): 31-52.
- Shove, Elizabeth. "Beyond the ABC: climate change policy and theories of social change." *Environment and planning A* 42.6 (2010): 1273-1285.

Week 3 (3/19): Sociology Facing Climate Change

- *Climate Change and Society* Chapter 1
- Norgaard, Kari Marie. "The sociological imagination in a time of climate change." *Global and Planetary Change* 163 (2018): 171-176.
- John Chung-En Liu and Andrew Szasz "Now is the Time to Add More Sociology of Climate Change to Our Introduction to Sociology Courses" *Teaching Sociology* 47(4) 273-283
- John Chung-En Liu, Yoram Bauman, and Yating Chuang "Climate Change and Economics 101: Teaching the Greatest Market Failure" *Sustainability* 11(5), 1340

Week 4 (3/26): Social Drivers of Climate Change

- *Climate Change and Society* Chapter 2
- Jorgenson, Andrew K., and Brett Clark. "Are the economy and the environment decoupling? A comparative international study, 1960-2005." *American Journal of Sociology* 118.1 (2012): 1-44.
- Kallis, Giorgos. "In defence of degrowth." *Ecological economics* 70.5 (2011): 873-880.

Week 5 (4/2): Spring Break (No Class)

Week 6 (4/9): Taiwan in the Warming World

- Assigned reading by the guest speakers

Week 7 (4/16): Market Forces and its Limitations

- *Climate Change and Society* Chapter 4
- Harmes, A., 2011. The limits of carbon disclosure: theorizing the business case for investor environmentalism. *Global Environmental Politics*, 11(2), pp.98-119.
- Rea, C. M. (2019). Regulatory thickening and the politics of market-oriented environmental policy. *Environmental Politics*, 28(7), 1167-1191.
- Ayling, Julie, and Neil Gunningham. "Non-state governance and climate policy: the fossil fuel divestment movement." *Climate Policy* 17.2 (2017): 131-149.

Week 8 (4/23): Movie Week (professor out of town)

Week 9 (4/30): Hiking + Writing Workshop

Individual meeting with Professor during our stroll in hills around Taipei

Week 10 (5/7): Climate/Environmental Justice

- Schlosberg, David, and Lisette B. Collins. "From environmental to climate justice: climate change and the discourse of environmental justice." *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 5.3 (2014): 359-374.
- Harrison, Jill Lindsey. "'We do ecology, not sociology': interactions among bureaucrats and the undermining of regulatory agencies' environmental justice efforts." *Environmental Sociology* 3.3 (2017): 197-212.

Week 11 (5/14): Civil Society and Social Movement

- McAdam, Doug. "Social movement theory and the prospects for climate change activism in the United States." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20 (2017): 189-208.
- Hess, David J., and Kate Pride Brown. "Green tea: clean-energy conservatism as a countermovement." *Environmental Sociology* 3.1 (2017): 64-75.
- Lee, Chengpang, and Ling Han. "Recycling Bodhisattva: The Tzu-Chi movement's response to global climate change." *Social Compass* 62.3 (2015): 311-325.

Week 12 (5/21): Knowledge, Media, and Communication

- Browse the reports from Yale Center of Climate Change Communication
- Nisbet, Matthew C. "Communicating climate change: Why frames matter for public engagement." *Environment: Science and policy for sustainable development* 51.2 (2009): 12-23.
- Jasny, Lorien, Joseph Waggle, and Dana R. Fisher. "An empirical examination of echo chambers in US climate policy networks." *Nature Climate Change* 5.8 (2015): 782-786.
- Dunlap, Riley E., and Aaron M. McCright. "Organized climate change denial." *The Oxford handbook of climate change and society* 1 (2011): 144-160.

Week 13 (5/28): China Facing Climate Change

- Gilley, Bruce. "Authoritarian environmentalism and China's response to climate change." *Environmental Politics* 21.2 (2012): 287-307.
- John Chung-En Liu and Bo Zhao "Who Speaks for Climate Change in China? Evidence from Weibo." *Climatic Change*, 140(3):413-422
- John Chung-En Liu "Low Carbon Plot: Climate Change Skepticism with Chinese Characteristics." *Environmental Sociology*, 1(4): 280-292

Week 14 (6/4): Flexible Week

Week 15 (6/11) and Week 16 (6/18): Student Presentation