

SOC 295 - Spring 2024 - SOCIOLOGY OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Dr. Jules Bacon

HSSC 1364

Office Hrs TBD

Welcome to this introduction to the sociology of Climate Change. In this class we focus mostly on recent work relevant to sociological perspectives on climate change. There are many points of connection between climate change and the study of social life but we will focus on a few major themes: Media / Culture and Outcomes / Responses.

WHAT BOOKS OR SUPPLIES DO I NEED?

You will need reliable internet access and a working device (preferably a computer, laptop, or tablet). If you have technology concerns, contact ITS. This link will take you to their student FAQ <https://www.grinnell.edu/about-grinnell/leadership-and-administration/offices-and-services/its/student-faq>

There are no required books for this class. All materials are available through the library at Grinnell College. If you are uncertain about how to access library materials, please speak with me as soon as possible.

HOW WILL THIS CLASS BE TAUGHT?

This course uses a mixture of informal lectures, discussion, hands-on activities, writing, and media engagement—including text, film, data sets, and primary source materials to meet the course learning objectives. There is a great deal of collaborative work in this course. Be advised.

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO LEARN?

In any course there are many different learning objectives. The following lists outline the main objectives for this class. They are divided into conceptual objectives, practical objectives, and relational objectives.

CONCEPTUAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Those who successfully complete this course will be able to answer the following questions at an advanced undergraduate level:

How are social institutions implicated in generating, resisting, and responding to climate change?

How do theories of framing and culture enhance our understanding of climate change?

How do theories of social change and social norms inform our understanding of climate change?

PRACTICAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Those who successfully complete this course will be able to do the following:

- Apply course concepts to observations of the social world
- Locate sociologically relevant peer-reviewed articles using a variety of databases
- Access and understand data
- Create a literature review
- Collect a data sample from publicly available social artifacts
- Code data
- Express ideas in clear and well-reasoned writing
- Use American Sociological Association (ASA) style in formal written work

RELATIONAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Those who successfully complete this course will be able to do the following:

- Engage in sociologically informed discussions with peers
- Give thoughtful consideration to ideas that differ from their own
- Approach questions and challenges collaboratively
- Be generous in their analysis of writings especially those from other times or cultures
- Slow the pace of their responses to allow time for thinking before speaking
- Reflect on their thoughts in a way that allows them to consider how new ideas are being integrated into their thinking

WHAT ABOUT GRADES?

Each professor has a different approach to grading and it is important to me that my students understand how I think about grades and assessment.

First, let me assure you that I understand that there are very good reasons for a student to focus on grades. There are risks and rewards attached to grades; this is especially true for those with scholarships. And regardless of risks and rewards, the majority of students entering college have been trained for twelve or more years to see grades as the most significant outcome of any course. I do not believe this to be true.

The intellectual / personal development of my students is my primary goal in teaching. Prioritizing grades over growth is counterproductive to this mission.

That said, assessment and evaluation of your progress is a critical part of any class and I will be evaluating how well you meet the course objectives.

In SOC 295 conceptual objectives are assessed via all forms of student work. Basically, anything you write or say should reflect your growing understanding of the concepts we cover in class. Does this mean that you can never say something that's not accurate? Or that you can't ask questions? No. Growth means getting things wrong and then trying again. Wrangling with difficult concepts until they are understood is an expected part of the learning process. So ask questions and make mistakes so that your conceptual grasp of environmental sociology can flourish.

Relational objectives are primarily assessed through student participation in discussions, group activities, etc. I will be looking for your ability to be collaborative, creative, and generous with others as we work together.

Practical objectives are assessed largely through your written work. Some assignments focus on helping you develop and demonstrate specific practical skills.

The mission here is to *stop worrying about grades and start focusing on your learning*.

WHAT COUNTS AS MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION?

Participation can mean many things, but some examples of what I would call meaningful participation include:

- Providing an insight into the topic being discussed
- Offering a relevant example for analysis
- Contributing to an ongoing analysis
- Demonstrating logical connections between observations and interpretations
- Drawing connections to course materials
- Refraining from opinion-based commentary
- Interrogating / providing supporting evidence
- Raising relevant questions

DUE DATES

JAN 25

All read Intro and a section from 2-4

https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_FullVolume.pdf

MODULE ONE: REPRESENTATION, FRAMING, CULTURE, MEDIA

Jan 30 [Question and Comment Day]

All Read Intro

Arnold. (2018). *Climate Change and Storytelling Narratives and Cultural Meaning in Environmental Communication* (1st ed. 2018.)

Feb 1 [Summary Day]

Read Ch 1, 2, OR 3

All Read Conclusion

Arnold. (2018). *Climate Change and Storytelling Narratives and Cultural Meaning in Environmental Communication* (1st ed. 2018.)

Feb 6 [Question and Comment Day]

All Read Ch 1

Nilsson, & Christensen, M. (2019). *Arctic geopolitics, media and power* (First edition). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429199646>

Feb 8 [Summary Day]

Read Ch 2, 3, 4, OR 5

All read Ch 6

Nilsson, & Christensen, M. (2019). *Arctic geopolitics, media and power* (First edition.). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429199646>

Feb 13 [Question and Comment Day]

All read Intro and Conclusion

Das, Jahnnabi. 2019. *Reporting Climate Change in the Global North and South: Journalism in Australia and Bangladesh*. United Kingdom: Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9780429402210.

Feb 15 [Summary Day]

All read Intro and one other chapter

Robbins. (2018). *Climate Change, Politics and the Press in Ireland*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429451157>

Feb 20 [Question and Comment Day]

All read Intro and Conclusion

Ganapathy, D. (2021). *Media and Climate Change: Making Sense of Press Narratives* (1st ed.). Routledge

Feb 22

TBD

MINI-MODULE A : Student Selected Readings

Feb 27 & 29

Groups present on articles or books related to a common theme in climate change. Should have some connection to media, culture or representation. Teams create a small literature review document that connects course readings with themes presented in their class presentation.

MODULE 2a: OUTCOMES and RESPONSES

March 5 [Question and Comment Day]

All read Intro

Ahuja. (2021). *Planetary specters: race, migration, and climate change in the twenty-first century*. UNIV OF NORTH CAROLINA PR.

March 7 [Summary Day]

Read Ch 1, 2, 3, OR 4

All read conclusion

Ahuja. (2021). *Planetary specters: race, migration, and climate change in the twenty-first century*. UNIV OF NORTH CAROLINA PR.

March 12 [Question and Comment Day]

All read Preface and Ch 1

Tuana. (2023). *Racial Climates, Ecological Indifference: An Ecointersectional Analysis* (First Edition.). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197656600.001.0001>

March 14 [Summary Day]

Read Ch 2, 3, 4, OR 5

All read Conclusion

Tuana. (2023). *Racial Climates, Ecological Indifference: An Ecointersectional Analysis* (First Edition.). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197656600.001.0001>

SPRING BREAK!!!!

MINI-RESEARCH MODULE

April 2 [Questions and Teams]

How does media source [your choice here] address / depict (some aspect of) climate change?
Teams will form. Bring a brief lit review and your question.

April 4 [Data collection and coding]

MODULE 2b: OUTCOMES and RESPONSES

April 9 [Question and Comment Day]

All Read Ch 1 & 2

Perera. (2022). *Children's health and the peril of climate change* (First Edition). Oxford University Press.

April 11 [Summary Day]

Read Ch 3, 4, 5, 6, OR 7

All Read Conclusion

Perera. (2022). *Children's health and the peril of climate change* (First Edition). Oxford University Press.

April 16 [Question and Comment Day]

All Read Intro and Ch 1

Oscar Berglund. (2020). *Extinction Rebellion and Climate Change Activism: Breaking the Law to Change the World* (1st ed.). Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-48359-3>

April 18 [Summary Day]

Read Ch 2, 3, 4, OR 5

All Read Conclusion

Oscar Berglund. (2020). *Extinction Rebellion and Climate Change Activism: Breaking the Law to Change the World* (1st ed.). Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-48359-3>

April 23 [Question and Comment Day]

All read Ch 1, 2, & 3

Winter, Christine J. 2021. *Subjects of Intergenerational Justice: Indigenous Philosophy, the Environment and Relationships*. United Kingdom: Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9781003097457.

April 25 [Summary Day]

Read Ch 4, 5, 6 OR 7

All read Ch 8

Winter, Christine J. 2021. *Subjects of Intergenerational Justice: Indigenous Philosophy, the Environment and Relationships*. United Kingdom: Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9781003097457.

April 30

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

May 2

TBD

May 7

Thomas Black, S., Anthony Milligan, R., & Heynen, N. (2016). Solidarity in climate/immigrant justice direct action: Lessons from movements in the US South. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 40(2), 284-298.

Fisher, D. R., & Nasrin, S. (2021). Climate activism and its effects. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, 12(1), e683.

May 9

Green, J. F. (2020). Less talk, more walk: why climate change demands activism in the academy. *Daedalus*, 149(4), 151-162.

Chazan, M., & Baldwin, M. (2019). Granny solidarity: Understanding age and generational dynamics in climate justice movements. *Studies in Social Justice*, 13(2), 244-261

GRADING

Question and Comment - 15%

Brief reading responses posted in the discussion board.

* **Summaries - 20%**

1-2 page summaries and collaborative PowerPoint slide shared in class

* **Mini-Module presentation - 10%**

15 minute group presentation with facilitation of discussion questions

Mini-Module literature review - 15%

A group produced literature review of 5 sources per person, topics TBD in consultation with me

* **Research Poster and Presentation - 15%**

A research poster presenting your research findings

Research Prep - 20%

In-class activities designed to build research skills

* **Final - 10%**

Items with * have a strict deadline.

These items are things which other people are counting on you to contribute towards.

A late summary will be max out at a B.

If you miss a presentation a make up may be possible depending on the circumstances discuss it with me.

Things without a star can be accepted up to one week late, no questions asked. Just turn it in and I will grade it.

IF YOU ARE SICK PLEASE STAY HOME

***If you miss class for any reason please check the assignments and discussion boards to get a sense of what we did / what you need to do to make up the class.

After a week, everything is a zero unless there's some very serious reason to extend the grace period.

WHAT ABOUT...?

WHAT ABOUT ACCOMMODATIONS?

If you have an accommodation letter, please check in with me early to make sure that I have received it and to discuss any concerns you might have about your participation in this course.

In general I aim to design a course that is accessible to all, but I am always learning and will be happy to work with you in any way I can if further changes need to be made.

If you have not spoken with the college about accommodations and wish to do so, please contact Jae Baldree at baldreej@grinnell.edu

It is important to be aware that at Grinnell you are not required to: register with disability resources; identify yourself to instructors, staff, or other students as having a disability; or accept accommodations you do not need or want. However, if you need and want accommodations, you are responsible for contacting disability resources and completing the process for requesting accommodations.

<https://www.grinnell.edu/about/offices-services/accessibility-disability/students>

WHAT ABOUT ACADEMIC HONESTY?

IS IT CHEATING IF I WORK WITH A FRIEND?

Grinnell College has a handbook on academic honesty which you can read at: https://www.grinnell.edu/sites/default/files/documents/AcademicHonesty_2017-18.pdf

Generally in this class my expectation is that you will often treat each other as colleagues and collaborators. It is therefore 100% acceptable to work together on activities, papers, and review quizzes.

Although you will be sharing ideas, it is your responsibility to write your own findings. In other words, no two papers or activities should say the exact same thing.

If you receive support from a peer on an assignment that is not explicitly a group assignment indicate this in an acknowledgement. For example: "Acknowledgements – Thank you to Jan Smith for her review and suggestions."

Citation is the other major form of acknowledgement that must be attended to in this course. Whenever you are summarizing, paraphrasing or directly quoting anything you must provide ASA formatted citation. This is a way of giving credit to the original source of the information that you are using.

You can find how to form an ASA citation at the following website

https://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/documents/teaching/pdfs/Quick_Tips_for_ASA_Style.pdf

IS IT CHEATING IF I USE CHATGPT OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

Maybe.... If you use AI you must cite your source and AI-generated materials should not account for more than a small portion of your work. That said, AI is not especially reliable. It can be thought of as an assistant but not as an expert. Furthermore, I try to create assignments that are unlikely to benefit much from the use of AI (meaning I test them out and I know what AI says as a response).

CAN I RECORD / SCREENSHOT / REPOST PARTS OF THIS CLASS?

No. No aspect of this course should be recorded / screenshot or shared in any way outside of this course. This policy is to protect the privacy and intellectual rights of all those involved.

HOW SHOULD WE WORK TOGETHER? WHAT IF A GROUP HAS A PROBLEM?

This class relies heavily on collaboration and community. It is essential that we work well together. Sociology is in many ways about connections so please prioritize making connections and developing your ideas both while engaging course materials and while engaging with each other.

Our ability to cultivate and maintain good relationships is our best chance for a just future. Remember that we must stay humble. None of us knows everything. None of us is perfect.

In this class there will be many occasions when you will be working with other people. It is critical that we all respect the time, boundaries, and contributions of those we collaborate with.

If you find that you are in an unworkable situation, please contact me immediately at baconjul@grinnell.edu and I will sort things out.

WILL THERE BE CONTENT WARNINGS? / WHAT ARE CONTENT WARNINGS?

Content warnings are notices that precede potentially sensitive content. Almost every issue that sociology explores, i.e. race, gender, class, sexuality, and social control, requires us to consider

situations that are often unjust, violent, and upsetting. In other words, these issues are the content of sociology. That's my warning.

WHAT IF I NEED HELP WITH SOMETHING?

If you need help with something specific to this course or have general questions about sociology, you should email me. I will either answer your questions through email or arrange a time for us to meet.

If you need help writing a paper, I am happy to talk with you. However, you may also benefit from working with folks at the Writing Lab. The Writing Lab offers one-on-one instruction to support student writers. They can be reached at: writing@grinnell.edu

We will also have writing mentors for this course. They will meet with you early in the term to introduce themselves and tell you how they can support your work in this course.

There are a number of similar labs which may be of use to you as a student beyond this class. Here are some helpful links:

Math Lab - <https://www.grinnell.edu/academics/majors-concentrations/math-stats/math-lab>

Reading Lab - laniuska@grinnell.edu Phone (641) 269-3118

Digital Liberal Arts Collaborative (DLAC) - dlac@grinnell.edu

Data Analysis and Social Inquiry Lab (DASIL) - dasil@grinnell.edu Phone (641) 269-9734

If you need help with your computer or with a program you are running for class, reach out to Information Technology Services - ITservices@grinnell.edu Phone (641) 269-4901

If you need to contact Student Health and Wellness please call SHAW at (641)-269-3230

If you need to talk to a counselor call the 24/7 Counseling Hotline – (641)-269-4404

PLEASE NOTE THAT THINGS MIGHT CHANGE. UPDATES WILL BE POSTED ON PWEB.