

Language and Climate Change

Ling 194/Env 194 | Spring 2020

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Class: Tuesday, Thursday 3:00 - 4:30pm
Humanities 112

Office hours: Tuesdays 9am-11am, or by appointment
Humanities 229

This course will explore how language use is both a contributing factor in the social aspects of environmental practices and a lens through which these aspects can be analyzed. In this course you will explore the role of language in a changing climate, reflecting on the interaction of language use and environmental practices, ideologies, and issues. It will primarily address the following questions: 1) How is language use connected to climate change? 2) How does a changing climate affect language use around the world?

Goal	Related tasks
Understand and investigate the intersections of language use and the climate crisis	Lectures, in-class activities, readings
Learn about ethnographic and discourse analytic research methods and practice their use	In-class activities, Field Assignments
Conduct original analysis of language use and the climate crisis	Field Assignments, Final Project

Required text:

No required text; all readings will be distributed via Moodle.

Schedule:

(Note: This schedule is subject to change; our Moodle page will have the most up-to-date version.)

Wk	Topic	Dates	Readings	Assignments due
1	Intro	Th 1/23 – First class		
2	Linguistic theories and methodologies/ Language and climate change: endangered languages	T 1/28 Th 1/30	Choose reading 1 (check moodle)	RR1 due Wednesday
3	Language and climate change: endangered languages, cont.	T 2/4 Th 2/6	Pullum – The Great Eskimo Vocabulary Hoax	

4	Linguistic constructions of nature	T 2/11 Th 2/13	Excerpt: Metaphors We Live By	FA1 due Tuesday
5	Ethnographic research methods	T 2/18 Th 2/20	Choose reading 2 (check moodle)	RR 2 due Monday
6	Environmentalism & social meaning	T 2/25 Th 2/27	Choose reading 3 (check moodle)	RR 3 due Wednesday
7	Skeptic & denialist discourses	T 3/3 Th 3/5	Choose reading 4 (check moodle)	RR 4 due Wednesday
8	Discourse analysis methods	T 3/10 Th 3/12		FA 2 due Tuesday
9	Spring break	<i>No class</i>		
10	Discourse analysis, cont.	T 3/24 Th 3/26	Choose reading 5 (check moodle)	RR 5 due Wednesday
11	Language & activism	T 3/31 Th 4/2 – No class	Choose reading 6 (check moodle)	RR 6 due Wednesday
12	Language & activism, cont.	T 4/7 Th 4/8		FA 3 due Tuesday
13	Race, gender, & climate justice	T 4/14 Th 4/16	Reading TBA	
14	Language, climate change, & emotions	T 4/21 Th 4/23	Bring two articles relevant to your final project to class	
15	Work on projects and wrap-up	T 4/28 Th 4/30 – Last class		Final project rough drafts due Tuesday Final project due Friday, 5/8

Assignments:

- **Field assignments** (3 total; 30%)

These assignments will involve data-gathering and/or hands-on participant-observation, and a writeup. Specific details and directions will be given for each field assignment.

- **Reading responses** (6 total; 30%)

Short (~1p) responses to readings; rather than summarizing readings, these should pose questions, and/or bring in related material or personal experience, that can be brought up in class discussion.

- **Final project** (30%)

The final project will be an extension of one field assignment from the class and will involve an original analysis of data written in a research paper format. Specific details and directions will be given in advance.

- **In class participation** (10%)

Participation grades will be self-assessed, though can be changed at the discretion of the professor.

Late work:

Late work will be penalized 10% for each day past the due-date. If you anticipate being unable to submit an assignment on time, please discuss it with me so that we can come to an accommodation.

Attendance Policy:

Missing* more than three classes will result in the lowering of your final grade by 5%; additional absences will result in further deductions.

*These absences do not include college-authorized absences for disability accommodations, religious reasons, or college-sponsored events.

Accessibility Commitment:

I am committed to ensuring access for all students. Accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Contact the Office of Disability Services, 651-696-6974, to schedule an appointment and discuss your individual circumstances. It is important to meet as early in the semester as possible; this will ensure that your accommodations can be implemented early on. The Assistant Dean of Students coordinates services for students seeking accommodations.

Academic Dishonesty:

Students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty – including, for instance, forgery, cheating, and plagiarism – are subject to disciplinary action.

- Forgery includes the alteration of college forms, documents or records, as well as the signing of such forms or documents by someone other than the proper designee.
- Cheating is the dishonest or unauthorized use of materials for academic work.
- Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's work (words, ideas, data, etc.) in a graded or published piece or in a speech.

You can learn more about the college's policy regarding academic dishonesty here:
<http://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/>

A note about wellness:

Here at Macalester, you are encouraged to make your well-being a priority throughout this semester and your career here. Investing time into taking care of yourself will help you engage more fully in your academic experience. Remember that beyond being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, financial, etc., and how they can have an academic impact. I encourage you to remember that sleeping, moving your body, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you be resilient at Macalester. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being or concerns about your classwork, please reach out to me or one of the resources Macalester offers (information listed on the Moodle page).