

ENVI 194 01– Global Climate Politics Spring 2022

Prof. Sylvia Cifuentes

Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:40 - 11:10 pm, Olin-Rice | Room 270

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Office hours: Thursdays 3:00-4:30 pm on Zoom and Tuesdays after class.

Course description

In the past decade, climate change events have become protagonists in the media. Among them, the devastating fires that consumed vast areas of Amazonia, California, and Australia captured the attention of people from all over the world. Reports are also increasingly linking the emergence of pandemics, like the one we are currently experiencing, to global environmental changes like deforestation. But how are states, non-governmental organizations, social movements, and other actors responding to these challenges? How just are those responses for those who will be most impacted, and have contributed the least, to climate change? This course surveys global climate politics and its different definitions, mechanisms, and actors—with an emphasis on Indigenous climate action. We will start by studying international climate governance and treaty negotiations, including the UNFCCC. Next, we will use political ecology and climate justice as lenses to evaluate different mechanisms to address these changes, involving, for instance, forests and adaptation. Lastly, we will examine the climate justice movement and the perspectives and actions of Indigenous and other marginalized groups and their organizations. We will work on a climate negotiations project throughout the semester to learn about a specific actor in climate politics and about the real-life implications of the concepts and ideas that we discuss in class.



Learning objectives

Through attendance of lectures, participation in classroom discussions, and completion of all assignments and group work, students will be able to:

1. Build an interdisciplinary understanding of how different actors create and/or influence global climate politics, and how their positionality and power shape their actions.
2. Apply the frameworks and concepts of political ecology and climate justice in explaining global climate politics and their implications.
3. Evaluate and critique specific agreements, ideas, policies, and initiatives that are created and implemented in the framework of global climate politics.
4. Develop research skills to assess the role of a specific government, environmental organization, or social movement in global climate negotiations.

***Pandemic statement:** I recognize that the current pandemic may impact your ability to perform in the course. Please send me an email if you are experiencing unexpected challenges and stay at home if you are feeling ill—we will find a way to support you through class notes and opportunities to make up for participation. All policies regarding attendance are below. Mask wearing is about community care, and we don't know what the particular situations of this course's participants and students and professors across campus are, so please wear a mask at all times while you are indoors.

Required readings

There is a course website available through Moodle that includes all required readings. Additionally, I will often post news articles, videos, or website information about the topics that we are analyzing in the course site, some of which we will review in class as part of our discussions. The reading materials and the lectures complement (not substitute) each other.

Guidance for reading: *With the course project and the quizzes in mind, attempt answering three questions after completing each reading: 1) What is the main argument? 2) Does it address political ecology and/or climate justice concerns? If so, how? 3) How does the reading expand or change my understanding of global climate politics and the roles of different actors in them?*

IMPORTANT DATES

Submit all assignments by the end of the day on Moodle

Project assignments	January 27, in class
Assignment 1	February 10
Quiz 1	February 22
Assignment 2	March 8
Assignment 3	March 31 st
Quiz 2	April 14
Negotiations exercise	April 21, 26 & 28, In class
Final Reflection	May 6 th

CLASS ASSESSMENT

15% Attendance, Preparation, and Participation

Your engaged, attentive, imaginative, and informed participation in all class discussions is encouraged. You are invited to bring your interests, experiences, and knowledge to class. Attendance to all classes is expected, see the policies for attendance and lateness below.

Quizzes 15%- There will be two multiple choice quizzes, based on the readings and lectures. You will be able to take them online on Moodle. More details will be available on Moodle.

70% Climate Change Negotiations Project and Exercise

You will represent a country, organization, or social movement in our semester-long climate change negotiations project and exercise. Throughout the semester you will complete several written assignments described below (more details and rubrics will be on Moodle). During the last three classes of the semester, you will represent your country or non-state actor in mock climate change negotiations. The goal of these negotiations will not only be to reach the best climate change agreement as possible, but also to analyze what parties have power in climate decision-making, and what avenues non-state actors take to move climate action forward.

Assignment descriptions:

1. *Social and Environmental Movements* [750-850 words - 10%]:

- a. If you represent a country, respond: what opportunities for activism and civil society-led social change are there? Do environmental movements, NGOs or civil society groups exist in your country? If so, what do they do? If not, are there any other ways in which citizens can influence climate action?
 - b. If you represent a non-state actor, give an overview of the history and work of the organization, highlighting its role in global climate politics. Additionally, identify its partners (does it partner with governments, businesses, or other organizations? Why or why not?).
2. Political Economy, NDCs, and Climate Action [850-900 words - 15%]:
- a. If you represent a country, respond to the following question: What are your country's main economic and industrial activities, and how do they impact climate change? Additionally, review your country's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and summarize its most important policies.
 - b. If you represent a non-state actor, respond to the following questions: what are the climate responses that it supports most strongly? How does it seek to achieve change? How does it approach industry and economic activities? In your answer, address how your actor engages with climate change mitigation, adaptation, energy, etc.
3. COP Report [850-1000 words - 15%]: What has been your country or organization's position/role during the COPs, particularly in Paris (2015) and Glasgow (2021)? To answer this question, you should summarize the role of your country or non-state actor and analyze it using a climate justice and/or political ecology lens. I encourage you to engage with the People's Summit for Climate Justice in your analysis as well.
4. Climate Change Negotiations [In-class exercise - 15%]: Each student will represent their country, organization, or movement to the best of their ability in a mock climate negotiation. Participation should be informed, professional, active, and creative. On the first day, you will deliver a speech to the class outlining the priorities of those who you are representing. Before this exercise, on April 12, you will meet with me to discuss your goals and plans for the negotiation. At the end of the negotiations, country representatives will turn in a climate resolution, and the representatives of non-state actors will turn in a joint declaration.
5. Final Reflection [1,200-1,350 words - 15%] Reflect on the following questions, drawing from the course's readings and what we have discussed in class:
- a. How does our negotiation and its outcome compare with the developments of the COPs and the Paris Agreement? Which are more transformative, and why? Illustrate with specific examples and discuss how you envision climate action in the future according to what we have learned.

COURSE OUTLINE

Syllabus subject to change - you will be adequately informed if this happens

Readings listed below. All are required

Module	W	Date	Topic	Assessment
1. Foundations of Global Climate Politics	1	Jan 20	Introduction & syllabus	
	2	Jan 25 & 27	Why Global Climate Politics?	
	3	Feb 1 & 3	International Climate Governance	
	4	Feb 8 & 10	Markets & Finance	Assignment 1
	5	Feb 15 & 17	What is Climate Justice?	

2. Global Responses to Climate Change	6	Feb 22 & 24	Forests, Agriculture, and Equity	Quiz 1
	7	Mar 1 & 3	Adaptation and Vulnerability	
	8	Mar 8 & 10	The Energy Transition	Assignment 2
	9	Mar 15 & 17	Spring Break	
3. Climate Movements and Justice	10	Mar 22 & 24	The Climate Movement(s)	
	11	Mar 29 & 31	Resistance to Extractivism	Assignment 3
	12	Apr 5 & 7	Indigenous Climate Politics	
	13	Apr 12 & 14	Project meetings & Climate Futures I	Quiz 2
	14	Apr 19 & 21	Climate Futures II & Climate Negotiations Exercise I	
	15	Apr 26 & 28	Climate Negotiations Exercise II & III	
	16	May 5	Final Reflection due online	

Part 1: Foundations of Global Climate Politics

WEEK 1: Introduction & Syllabus review

Syllabus review

Lenton, T. M., Rockström, J., et al (2019). Climate tipping points—too risky to bet against. *Nature* 575, 592-595.

WEEK 2: Why Global Climate Politics?

O'Neill, K. (2018) *The Environment in International Relations*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2: Global Environmental Problems.

Klein, N. (2014) *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs the Climate* pp. 1-25.

WEEK 3: International Climate Governance: Conferences & Treaties

Cléménçon, R. (2012). Welcome to the Anthropocene: Rio+ 20 and the meaning of sustainable development. *The Journal of Environment & Development*, 21(3), 311-338.

Cléménçon, R. (2016). The Two Sides of the Paris Climate Agreement: Dismal Failure or Historic Breakthrough? *The Journal of Environment and Development* 25(1) 3–24

Turn in assignment 1 by the end of the day on Thursday

WEEK 4: Climate Change, Markets, and Finance

Robbins et al (2014) *Environment and Society: A Critical Introduction*. Chapter 3: "Markets"

Gifford, L., & Knudson, C. (2020). Climate finance justice: International perspectives on climate policy, social justice, and capital. *Climatic Change* 161:243–249

Peet, R., Robbins, P., & Watts, M. (Eds.). (2010). *Global political ecology*. Routledge. Chapter 1: Global Nature (pp. 1-10).

In class video: The Story of Cap & Trade

WEEK 5: What is Climate Justice?

Schlosberg, D., & Collins, L. B. (2014). From environmental to climate justice: climate change and the discourse of environmental justice. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, 5(3), 359-374.

Foran, J. (2016). Reimagining Radical Climate Justice. In Wapner, P., & Elver, H. (Eds.) *Reimagining Climate Change*, pp. 150-170.

Take quiz 1 on Thursday

Part II: Global Responses to Climate Change

WEEK 6: Forests, Agriculture, and Equity

Robbins et al. (2014) *Environment and Society: A Critical Introduction*. Chapter 10 "Trees."

McAfee, K. (2016). Green Economy and Carbon Markets for Conservation and Development: A Critical View. *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics*, 16 (3), 333-353.

WEEK 7: Climate Change Adaptation and Vulnerability

Wilson, N. J. (2014). The politics of adaptation: subsistence livelihoods and vulnerability to climate change in the Koyukon Athabascan village of Ruby, Alaska. *Human Ecology*, 42(1), 87-101.

Alston, M. (2013). Women and adaptation. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, 4(5), 351-358.

Smith (2006), There's No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster. pp. 1-10.

Turn in assignment 2 by the end of the day on Thursday

WEEK 8: The Energy Transition

Jerez, B., Garces, I. & Torres, R. (2021). Lithium extractivism and water injustices in the Salar de Atacama, Chile: The colonial shadow of green electromobility. *Political Geography*, 87, 102

Doyle, A. (2021, June 9). Indigenous peoples urge Harvard to scrap solar geoengineering

project. Thomson Reuters Foundation.

https://news.trust.org/item/20210609202041-gptbr/?fbclid=IwAR3LgDCKh0_BySkSZBlpC74XKK5VMP_4E7-mUzzJ7mTFImBkbWZmLYbPwNM

WEEK 9: Spring Break

WEEK 10: The Climate Movement(s)

Foran, J., Gray, S., & Grosse, C. (2017). "Not yet the end of the world": political cultures of opposition and creation in the global youth climate justice movement. *Interface* 9 (2), 353 – 379

Dietz, M., & Garrelts, H. (Eds.). (2014). Routledge handbook of the climate change movement. Routledge. Ch. 32: Between Pragmatism and Radicalization: NGOs and social movements in international climate politics (pp. 269 – 278).

https://archive.org/details/routledgehandboo0000unse_p1h1

In class reading: The Bali Principles of Climate Justice

WEEK 11: Climate Justice and Resistance to Extractivism

Estes, N. (2019). *Our history is the future: Standing Rock versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the long tradition of Indigenous resistance*. Verso. Prologue: 1-25

Mwenda, M., & Bond, P. (2020). African climate justice: Articulations and activism. In *Climate Justice and Community Renewal* (pp. 108-127). Routledge.

Turn in assignment 3 by the end of the day on Thursday – Review the Earth Negotiations Bulletin

WEEK 12: Indigenous Climate Politics

Whyte, K. (2017). Indigenous Climate Change Studies: Indigenizing Futures, Decolonizing the Anthropocene. *English Language Notes*, 55(1), 153-162.

Cifuentes, S. (2021) Rethinking Climate Governance: Amazonian Indigenous Climate Politics and Integral Territorial Ontologies. *Journal of Latin American Geography* 20(2), 131-155.

WEEK 13: Climate Futures I & Climate Negotiations Meetings

Gergan, M. D., & Curley, A. (2021). Indigenous Youth and Decolonial Futures: Energy and Environmentalism among the Diné in the Navajo Nation and the Lepchas of Sikkim, India. *Antipode*.

Tschakert, P., et al (2021). Multispecies justice: Climate-just futures with, for and beyond humans. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, 12(2), e699

Sign up for a Climate Negotiation meeting (taking place on Tuesday) via Moodle

Take Quiz 2 on Thursday

WEEK 14: Climate Futures II & Climate Negotiations Exercise I

Before the Negotiations Exercise: Review the text of the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement, the Earth Negotiations Bulletin, and other resources available on Moodle.

Deliver your speech in class.

WEEK 15: Climate Negotiations Exercise II & III

Turn in a Class Resolution and/or a Declaration by the end of the day on Thursday, via Moodle.

WEEK 16: Final Reflection due on Thursday, May 5th by the end of the day (11:59pm).

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE: This classroom is meant to be a safe learning environment where we work together to help each other learn throughout the quarter. To make this possible I expect students to arrive on time and be prepared to participate actively in discussion. You are actively participating if you contribute often and constructively to group discussions and activities, take notes, ask thoughtful questions, and listen respectfully when others are talking. This class will raise questions about the social and environmental world(s) that can challenge our assumptions. We will all need to be very careful to respect differing points of view and, above all, to respect your classmates and instructor in the same way that you would like to be respected. Here is a list of rules to abide by in promoting productive discussion:

Come to class open-minded – Make sure to come to class ready to discuss the material with an open-mind.

No interruptions – when someone is speaking allow them to finish.

Word Choice – be aware of the way your word choice may affect others.

Step Up, Step Down – If you see a place to contribute, Step Up. If you realize you have been participating heavily, Step Down and let others also contribute.

Refrain from speaking in generalizations – When speaking refrain from generalizations that categorize all people in a certain way.

Ask Your Questions – Every question regarding the course materials is relevant. Speak up about any questions you have so we can all learn.

Active Listening – Don't just wait for your turn to speak. Engage other students and build from their input.

POLICIES

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty has no place in this course, as it erodes the basic foundations of higher education: exchange, debate, and the thoughtful consideration of different ideas. Examples of behavior that violates Macalester's Academic Integrity Policy, as well as the process and sanctions involved, can be found on the Academic Programs website, <http://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/>

Office Hours and communication

You are encouraged to come see me during office hours. You are welcome to bring questions about class material, environmental justice in general, career paths, and other concerns you

may have. I will not respond to questions about course material or assignments via email, nor will I respond outside of working hours (esp. on weekends). However, seek out an individual appointment if you wish to discuss a private matter, and please let me know as soon as you can if you are experiencing unexpected difficulties.

Please include “ENVI 194” in the subject line of any email you send to me about this course.

Absences and Lateness

Attendance is very important for this class as discussion will be one of the main learning mechanisms. Because of the challenges that the current pandemic continues to pose, you are allowed up to two absences from class without penalty. For every absence beyond the two, your participation grade will be lowered one letter grade (10 out of 100). Again, please let me know soon if you are experiencing unexpected difficulties.

It is disruptive to arrive at class late. I do keep track of tardy arrivals. In this course, three tardy arrivals add up to one absence. You can check your attendance record with me any time to see where you stand.

Late assignments will be reduced 5 points (of 100) for each calendar day late. Please come to see me or email me in advance if you anticipate that you may need an extension.

RESOURCES

Disability Services Office

I am committed to ensuring access to course content for all students, including those with disabilities. I honor academic accommodations as outlined via Disability Services, and in discussion regarding what is reasonable for this course. Students with long or short-term disabilities should schedule an appointment by emailing disabilityservices@macalester.edu or calling 651-696-6275.

Health and Wellness Center

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. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please reach out to the Laurie Hamre Center for Health & Wellness: Leonard Center Room 53, 651-696-6275 (call to make an appointment). Follow [macalesterhwc](#) on Instagram. www.macalester.edu/healthandwellness/. You can schedule a **Counselling Appointment** there as well. If you press “2” you can be connected to ProtoCall, a free phone counseling service that Macalester provides for students available 24/7

Resident Advisor (RA) and Resident Hall Director (RHD)

- Both RAs and RHDs can serve as a first point of contact and are able to connect you to resources during mental health crises.

Other Support Offices

- Center for Religious and Spiritual Life, (651-696-6298), Weyerhaeuser Chapel
- Office of Student Affairs (651-696-6220), Weyerhaeuser 119

The Max Center

The MAX Center (<https://www.macalester.edu/max/#/0>) is Macalester's academic resource center. I strongly encourage you to take full advantage of any and all of the excellent resources they provide there, as they are committed to supporting all students to succeed at Macalester.

Digital Resources

ITS has loaner laptops for all students. If you have a technology need, you should contact the [Digital Resource Center](#).