Culture, Politics and Climate Change
T/H 9:30 – 10:45 AM
Duane G1B27

Instructor: Max Boykoff
contact email: boykoff@colorado.edu

Course Web Page: http://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/students/envs_4800

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-3 PM, and by appt.
CIRES Center for Science & Technology Policy
1333 Grandview Avenue
contact phone: 303-735-6316

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The objective of this course is to critically analyze how climate changing activities find meaning in our daily lives by way of politics and culture. By way of four main themes addressed in the sessions over the semester, we will explore how more formal climate science and policy permeate the spaces of our ‘everyday’, in terms of attitudes, perspectives, intentions, behavioral change and resistances therein. In a discussion-based seminar format, we will attempt to understand the intricate dynamics between multilevel institutional architectures and the landscape of actors, primarily those outside national governments which are able to influence outcomes. In the course, we will aim to challenge our thinking about climate change as a problem, develop new frameworks for analyzing climate challenges, and discuss practical and conceptual alternatives for mitigation and adaptation actions in our individual and collective lives. Critical engagement in session discussions with these topics and themes will help us to distinguish patterns, appraise and assess values, and gain insights from a variety of perspectives and viewpoints concerning climate change.

COURSE READING MATERIALS

There are two main texts for the course (one required, one optional):


In addition, we will read and discuss many academic journal articles as well as referring to gray literature (newspaper and magazine reports etc.) throughout the term. A number of these are listed below (and are available through the course webpage), while others will be added as we go.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Overview
This is an upper division course and the reading and writing schedule will be rigorous. It is important that everyone stay up to date with the readings and all other expectations. All readings must be completed before the class for which they are assigned. Also, all assignments turned in must be typewritten using 12 pt Times New Roman, double-spaced with 1” margins.

Attendance & Participation
Roundtable Discussion (15 pts - comment sheet*; 20 pts – facilitation; 15 pts – summary*)
Team Project (10 pts – proposal*; 40 points – presentation)
Final Exam/Individual Research Paper (10 pts – proposal*; 40 pts – final version*)

* for late assignments I will have to deduct 10% per calendar day the item is late (starting from the class session in which they’re due [except that comment sheets are deemed late with the deduction starting after 6PM on Wednesdays])

Because this is a ‘Critical Thinking’ course, the class structure will consist mainly of roundtable discussions. Unfortunately, in the sessions we will not be able to discuss all dimensions and facets of the themes and readings. So it will be up to you to engage both critically and mindfully with these outside of our meetings as well.

To help you engage critically with these themes and readings, you may wish to ask yourselves the following questions:

- What are the main points or themes?
- How (well) do the readings address important facets of the topic?
- What is the author’s central thesis?
- How is this work similar to or different from other course material, your own ideas, or other information you have come across in the past?
- Where are possible weaknesses in the author’s arguments?
- Do you agree with the author’s central assertions, theories, ideas? If so, why? If not, why not?

Considering and/or writing out answers to these questions will help you as you prepare for the class discussions (especially in the week you co-facilitate) as well as your individual research papers. I also encourage you to arrange additional student-led discussion groups outside of class as needed/desired.

Attendance
Each person enrolled in the course is expected to participate in each session with the issues that are discussed. This requires that everyone be consistently present in each class through discussion and questions about the class topics and materials. Our discussion inevitably will build upon previous sessions. Consequently, if you accumulate more than three unexcused absences during the quarter, you will not pass the course.

Class Participation
Participation will be evaluated through your engagement in the class discussions as well as contributions through class preparation. An important requirement will be that everyone come to each class session ready to contribute with notes and comments you have assembled based on the readings. These might consist of elements of the following:

- Clarification questions that you may have about one or more of the readings; these can help to address points in the readings that were confusing or contradictory
- Comments on key points in the readings, a portion of a reading, or theme(s) between readings
- Comments about (dis)agreements that you may have with assertions or themes in the readings
- Reflections on something surprising, new, or counterintuitive that you learned from the readings

Participating in class discussion, and preparing comments helps in a number of ways. Of note, while improving your detailed understanding the material, it also provides a series of working notes from which you can draw for your roundtable facilitation and final paper.

**Roundtables: Comment Sheets, Discussion (Co-)Facilitation, Summary**

During the Thursday sessions (except for the first week, the Feb 4 session and group presentation weeks), everyone will take turns co-facilitating roundtable discussions of the week’s readings and themes. I will provide a sign-up sheet in the first sessions in order to pick the week and theme for facilitation. This co-facilitation will have three main elements: 1) preparation of a Comment Sheet before the session, 2) (co-)facilitation during the session, and 3) a Summary after the session

**Comment Sheets**

Co-facilitators will prepare how they tentatively plan to guide discussions. They must coordinate and draw up notes to distribute, providing a set of potential discussion points. Co-facilitators should target approximately 2 pages of comments/questions and send them to the other course participants over email by 5PM the evening before the session (To post a message to the class, send the attachment via email to envs4800@sciencepolicy.colorado.edu). These comments will direct us all to what co-facilitators determine to be salient, important, and key themes as well as critiques and questions from the week’s material to discuss during the session. *These can be prepared and distributed individually or together.*

**Summaries**

Based on the co-facilitated roundtable discussion, co-facilitators will each submit an approximately 1000 word summary on the content as well as the process of preparation for and activities in the roundtable discussion. When turning in the Summary, note your word count at the top of the page. Also, use the Harvard Citation Scheme for all references (see below for more).

Summaries must include:

- Substantive treatment of what discussions and questions transpired in the session. Were there particular points of contention, or confusion? Were they resolved? Why or why not?
- Discussion of how the roundtable session may have or may have not furthered critical understanding of the themes for that week.
- Reflections on your facilitation role in the session: What worked in co-facilitating the discussion? What did not? What would you do differently the next time?
Team Project
This team project is designed to build skills in collaboration and critique. This project is also set up so that everyone can creatively and uniquely apply theoretical and academic tools to 'real world' environments. There is no shortage of contentious and important issues in politics, culture and climate change. However, teams (of about 4, depending on the final number of participants in the course) will need to select a topic from one of these four themes from the course: 1) institutions, actors, collective psychology, 2) media, 3) public engagement, 4) businesses, NGOs, and celebrities. On Tuesday, January 19 I will ask each of you to select a part of one of the four themes, as a point of departure, thereby joining a team for the project presentations. More details on specific topics for team presentations will be discussed in the sessions preceding this date.

Based on these themes, teams will develop a presentation that works through a specific case-study to illustrate interacting factors. In so doing, the team will identify key actors and connected issues involved, power struggles and oppositions therein. The presentation should identify the problem(s), as they relate to culture, politics and climate change. Groups will then critique and analyze competing viewpoints and struggles over possible courses of action. Planning, coordination and organization are indispensable for success! Team project proposals will be due Thursday, February 18 (worth 10 points) so begin this early. The proposals must be a clear 400-500 word description of the specific topic the group plans to pursue, and associated issues you will address in the presentation. note your word count at the top of the page

Final Exam/Individual Research Paper
This individual research paper is designed for you to draw critically and creatively from the class readings and discussions. This paper must be 2500-3000 words (not including references), and should center on your unique analytical perspective on a particular theme, connection(s) or contradiction(s) across themes discussed in this course. At least ten in-text/end-of-text citations must be included in the individual research paper (only three of these may be web-based). All work here must be original (not previous/concurrent papers from another class). Also, note your word count at the top of the page

This assignment aims to deepen your understanding and critical analysis on a specific issue related to culture, politics and climate change that you’ve found interesting. ALERT: papers must relate to course content (in terms of the topic chosen, as well as some of the references you use), and not merely to climate change (or something else) more broadly. Treat this as another opportunity to further pursue areas, themes and issues of interest that you find exciting and worthwhile through your co-facilitation week and/or team project. I encourage you to be very specific with your paper topic.

Please feel free to discuss possible topics with me before you submit your individual research paper proposal (worth 10 points) on Thursday, March 11. The proposals must consist of a 300-400 word abstract, a tentative outline, and a bibliography of relevant readings. Final exam/individual papers are due (hard copies!) at the scheduled time of the final exam, Monday, May 3, 1:30PM – 4PM.
IMPORTANT: In-text citations are markers for the more complete reference at the end of the text. They’re not the same. Please see me in office hours and/or ask questions in class if this is unclear.

There are a number of acceptable ways to cite references. For our purposes in this class, use the Harvard Citation Style (a.k.a. Harvard referencing). This is the most common referencing scheme in articles that you will be reading in the course, so you can find many examples of this citation scheme in the reading materials listed below. Also, feel free to search the web for further examples. As a warning, I will increasingly strict about this as the term progresses, so that we can all be citation whizzes by April!

Here are few examples of in-text citations:

**in-text citations of paraphrased material:**
In the crucible of news production, as elsewhere, disciplinary practices make individuals both the object of discipline and the instruments of its exercise (Foucault 1979).

**in-text citations of quoted material:**
According to Sharon Dunwoody and Hans Peter Peters, the typical journalist in the U.S. is “even less likely to have majored in science or math than is the average US resident” (Dunwoody & Peters 1992, p. 208).

Here are some examples of end-of-text citations:

**a book:**

**a book chapter in an edited volume:**

**an article:**

**a worldwide web citation:**

**a report:**

**University Recommended Syllabus Statements: Additional Logistics**
If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see guidelines at http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/go.cgi?select=temporary.html Disability Services' letters for students with disabilities indicate legally mandated reasonable accommodations. The syllabus statements and answers to FAQs can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. See full details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of sexual harassment or discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://www.colorado.edu/odh

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/
**SCHEDULE:** (I may add/remove readings as discussions unfold)

**COMPONENT I: OVERVIEW – institutions, actors, (collective) psychology**

**Tuesday, January 12**  
- general discussion of logistics, expectations, plans for the course

**Thursday, January 14**  
- select co-facilitation week


**Tuesday, January 19**  
- select group presentation theme


**Thursday, January 21**


Tuesday, January 26


Thursday, January 28
Hulme, M. (2009) Why we disagree about climate change: understanding controversy, inaction and opportunity Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, Chapter 6 (pp. 178-210)


COMPONENT II: MASS MEDIA – who speaks for the climate?

Tuesday, February 2
Hulme, M. (2009) Why we disagree about climate change: understanding controversy, inaction and opportunity Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, Chapter 7 (pp. 211-247)


Thursday, February 4
- from 930-1030AM I’ll give a lecture and lead an online discussion with all of us, and
students in the University of Minnesota ‘Mass media and social change’ course, taught
by Professor Mark Pedelty (let’s hope it’ll work!)

Boykoff M. (2009) ‘‘We Speak for the Trees’: Media Reporting on the Environment’, Annual Review of
Environment and Resources, 34, pp. 431-458

Geography, 27(5), pp. 549-569.


Tuesday, February 9
Carvalho, A. and J. Burgess (2005) ‘Cultural circuits of climate change in UK broadsheet newspapers,


Thursday, February 11

Harbison, R. (2006) ‘Whatever the weather: media attitudes to reporting climate change’ Panos Institute
Report London


Tuesday, February 16
- imagining new media, small group exercise

climate change and conservation science’, Interdisciplinary Science Reviews, 30(3), pp. 231-240.

the Media (Boyce, T. and J. Lewis eds.) Peter Lang Publishing: London, pp. 129-144.

**Thursday, February 18**
- **team project presentation proposal due**


**Tuesday, February 23 – NO CLASS**

**COMPONENT III: THE PUBLIC – understanding, engagement, mediating images**

**Thursday, February 25**


**Tuesday, March 2**
Hobsen, K. (2008) ‘Reasons to be cheerful: Thinking sustainably in a climate changing world’ Geography Compass, 2, pp. 1-16


Thursday, March 4
Lorenzoni, I. and M. Hulme (2009) ‘Believing is seeing: laypeople’s views of future socio-economic and climate change in England and Italy’ Public Understanding of Science 18, pp. 383-400

Maibach, E., C. Roser-Renouf, and A. Leiserowitz (2009) ‘Global warming’s six Americas: an audience segmentation analysis’ Yale Project on Climate Change and George Mason University


Tuesday, March 9


Thursday, March 11
- individual paper topic proposals due


Tuesday, March 16


**Thursday, March 18**


Doyle, J. (2007). ‘Picturing the climate(c)tic: Greenpeace and the representational politics of climate change communication.’ Science as Culture 16(2), pp. 129-150.


**Tuesday & Thursday, March 23 & 25 – NO session meetings; SPRING BREAK**

**COMPONENT IV: BUSINESSES, NGOs & CELEBRITIES – neo-millennial charismatic megafauna**

**Tuesday, March 30**


**Thursday, April 1**


Tuesday, April 6


Thursday, April 8


Tuesday, April 13


**Thursday, April 15**


**COMPONENT V: TEAM PRESENTATIONS**

**Tuesday & Thursday, April 20 & 22**
- *team presentations*

**Tuesday & Thursday, April 27 & 29**
- *team presentations*

**FINAL EXAM**

**Monday, May 3, 1:30PM – 4PM**
- *final individual paper due*