

**UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**

**SOCIOLOGY 4471F-200 ('Sociology of Climate Change')**

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<b>TERM:</b>	Fall Term 2022
<b>INSTRUCTOR:</b>	Dr. Michael E. Gardiner
<b>OFFICE:</b>	SSC 5424 (661-2111, ex. 85139; e-mail: <a href="mailto:megardin@uwo.ca">megardin@uwo.ca</a> )
<b>CLASS TIME &amp; LOCATION</b>	Mondays 9:30 am - 12:30 pm (SSC 5230 and online)
<b>DELIVERY METHOD:</b>	Blended
<b>OFFICE HOURS:</b>	By appointment

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Anthropogenic climate change has emerged as *the* global issue of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century. Yet Sociology has been slow to address the social characteristics and ramifications of climate change. In helping to redress this oversight, this course seeks to explore a series of interlocking topics, including: the roots of the present crisis in the consolidation of 'fossil capital' and the modern techno-scientific world-view; possible effects of global warming (rising sea-levels, habitat destruction, agricultural collapse, mass migration, war), and how they might be assessed and mitigated; questions of environmental ethics and the emergence of such activist movements as Extinction Rebellion; different ways of conceptualizing human/nature relations (indigenous, feminist, 'alter-modern', etc.); cultural perceptions of climate change, including climate denialism and 'climate trauma'; the 'Anthropocene' vs. 'Capitalocene' debate; and approaches that connect climate breakdown to intensifying social inequalities and the rising danger of neo-fascism(s) (including 'eco-fascism'), such as arguments for transitioning to a post-carbon economy, prospects for a 'Green New Deal', and the relationship between pandemics and climate change.

**Prerequisite(s):**

Registration in third year or above in any Department of Sociology module, or fourth year in any module.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

**Antirequisite(s):** Sociology 4485F/G taught in 2020/2021

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will:

- \* Have a deep and broad understanding of contemporary social thought as it relates to climate change and related environmental issues
- \* Understand how social thought informs other branches of sociology
- \* Significantly develop their critical and creative thinking & writing skills
- \* Develop presentation skills (clearly express ideas and arguments orally & lead discussions)

## MAIN TEXTS (ONLINE)

All readings online accessible via OWL/CT

## COMMUNICATION

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

## GRADE BREAKDOWN:

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

Class participation (synchronous)	15%
Asynchronous forum postings	10%
Class presentation	20%
Term paper proposal	10%
Term paper	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

### 1. Synchronous virtual meetings (15% participation)

Seminars will be synchronous sessions via Zoom scheduled during the allotted time above. However, class will be split into two groups of equal size. Group 1 will have class between 10 am – 11:00 am weekly; Group 2 will be scheduled between 11:15 am – 12:15 pm. Each class will generally be organized around one oral student presentation (more on this below). The goal is to try to overcome the limitations of the technology as much as possible and emulate a face-to-face seminar by having multiple smaller groups. **Web cameras must normally be turned 'on' for the duration of class.**

### 2. Asynchronous forum postings (10%)

10% of the final grade will be allotted to written responses to *one* of the class discussion questions pertaining to the readings posted each week (2 marks each, five per term), 200-250

words each post. Such postings cannot involve questions or readings student base their oral presentation on (see below). Students can, and indeed are encouraged to respond to such postings for discussion purposes, but only in a respectful and scholarly manner.

### **3. Class presentation (20%)**

Each student will be required to present orally on one of the readings assigned in a given week. This will be a critical précis that raises questions for class discussion. Prepare for a 15 minute presentation. The use of (very) short video clips or other materials is acceptable, but has to be approved by the Professor in advance. A week after the presentation, the student will submit a written version of the talk for grading (20% of final grade).

### **4. Term paper proposal (10%)**

Term paper proposals will be due 24<sup>th</sup> Oct. by 4:00 pm. Two pages point form, single spaced, plus one page of references (minimum five). The Professor will comment on the proposal and provide feedback and additional references relevant for the writing of the final term paper.

### **5. Term paper (45%)**

The final term paper (3000-3500 words, double-spaced, 12-15 pages, 12-scale font Times Roman), worth 45% of the final grade, will be due 8<sup>th</sup> Dec. by 4 pm. (Comments on major term papers will only be provided if requested in advance of submission, and late assignments will receive no written feedback.)

### **Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning:**

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

### **Student Absences:**

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

### ***Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:***

For work totaling 10% or more of the final course grade, students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible. Extensions will be negotiated for any valid absences so that the essential requirements of the course are still met.

**Note:** missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is **not** sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established

by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty of Social Science Academic Counselling Office.

## **SCHEDULE**

### ***Week 1 – Sept. 12 - Orientation***

### ***Week 2 - Sept. 19 - What is Climate Change?***

Naomi Klein, 'One Way or Another, Everything Changes', *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014, 1-25 (25 pgs.)

David Wallace-Wells, 'Cascades', *The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming*, New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2019, 3-36 (33 pgs.)

### ***Week 3 - Sept. 26 - The Sociological Imagination and Climate Change***

Robert J. Antonio and Brett Clark, 'The Climate Change Divide in Social Theory', Riley E. Dunlap and Robert J. Brulle (eds.), *Climate Change and Society: Sociological Perspectives*, 2015, 333-368 (26 pgs + 9 pgs. refs.).

Kari Marie Norgaard, 'The Sociological Imagination in a Time of Climate Change', *Global and Planetary Change*, 163 (April), 2018, 171-176 (5 pgs. + 2 pgs. refs.)

John Urry, 'Society Matters', *Climate Change and Society*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011, 1-17; 169-171 (refs.) (17 pgs.).

### ***Week 4 – Oct. 3 - Anthropocene vs. Capitalocene***

John Bellamy Foster, Hannah Holleman, and Brett Clark, 'Imperialism in the Anthropocene', *Monthly Review*, 71(3) (July-August), 2019, 70-88 (15 pgs. + 3 pgs. refs.).

Daniel Hartley, 'Anthropocene, Capitalocene, and the Problem of Culture', Jason W. Moore (ed.), *Anthropocene or Capitalocene: Nature, History and the Crisis of Capitalism*, Oakland: PM Press, 2016, 154-165 (11 pgs.).

Andreas Malm and Alf Hornborg, 'The Geology of Mankind? A Critique of the Anthropocene Narrative', *The Anthropocene Review*, 1(1), 2014, 62-69 (8 pgs.).

### ***Week 5 – Oct. 10 – Thanksgiving Holiday (no classes)***

### ***Week 6 – Oct. 17 - Climate trauma/catastrophism/pandemics***

E. Ann Kaplan, 'Prologue: Climate Trauma and Hurricane Sandy', *Climate Trauma: Foreseeing the Future in Dystopian Film and Fiction*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, xiii-xix (7 pgs.).

Andreas Malm, 'Corona and Climate', *Corona, Climate, Chronic Emergency*, 2020, London and New York: Verso, 1-29 (28 pgs.).

Susan Orbach, 'Climate Sorrow', *This is Not a Drill: An Extinction Rebellion Handbook*, London: Penguin Books, 2019, 65-68 (4 pgs.).

Roy Scranton, 'Learning How to Die in the Anthropocene', Imre Szeman and Dominic Boyer (eds), *Energy Humanities: An Anthology*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2017, 384-388 (4 pgs.).

### **Week 7 – Oct. 24 - Climate Denialism, Ecocapitalism, Ecofascism**

Riley E. Dunlap and Aaron M. McCright, 'Challenging Climate Change: The Denial Countermovement', Riley E. Dunlap and Robert J. Brulle (eds.), *Climate Change and Society: Sociological Perspectives*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, 300-32 (24 pgs. + 7 pgs. refs.).

Adrian Parr, 'Climate Capitalism', *The Wrath of Capital: Neoliberalism and Climate Change*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2012, 8-21 (13 pgs. + 150-153 refs.).

Blair Taylor, 'Alt-Right Ecology: Ecofascism and Far-Right Environmentalism in the United States', Bernhard Forchtner (ed.), *The Far Right and the Environment: Politics, Discourse and Communication*, London and New York: Routledge, 2020, 275-292 (14 pgs. + 5 pgs. refs.).

### **Week 8 – Oct. 31 – Reading Break (no classes)**

### **Week 9 – Nov. 7 - Media, Infrastructure and Climate Change**

James Bridle, 'Climate', *New Dark Age: Technology and the End of the Future*, London: Verso, 2018, 47-76 (29 pgs. + 260-62 refs.).

Sean Cubit, 'Energy', *Finite Media: Environmental Implications of Digital Technologies*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2017, 13-46 (33 pgs.).

Camilo Mora *et al.*, 'Bitcoin Emissions Alone Could Push Global Warming above 2°C', *Nature Climate Change*, 8(11), 2018, 931-933 (3 pgs.).

### **Week 10 – Nov. 14 - Activism, Climate Justice**

Andrew Glikson, 'The Criminal Dimension of Climate Change', *Monthly Review*, 2017, 58-62 (4 pgs.) <https://monthlyreview.org/2019/03/01/the-criminal-dimension-of-climate-change/>

Bradley C. Parks and J. Timmons Roberts, 'Climate Change, Social Theory and Justice', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 27(2-3), 2010, 134–166 (20 pgs. + 12 pgs. refs.)

Selections from *This is Not a Drill: An Extinction Rebellion Handbook*, London: Penguin Books, 2019.

Extinction Rebellion, 'Declaration of Rebellion', 1-2 (2 pgs.).

Farhana Yamin, 'Die, Survive or Thrive?', 21-27 (6 pgs.).

Mohamed Nasheed, 'We are Not Prepared to Die' (31-34 (4 pgs.).

Firefighter, California, 'There's Fear Now' (46-47) (2 pgs.).

Douglas Rushkoff, 'Survival of the Richest' (58-64) (7 pgs.).

Matthew Todd – 'The Climate Emergency and the End of Diversity' (69-72) (4 pgs.).

Roger Hallam, 'The Civil Resistance Model' (99-102) (4 pgs.).

### ***Week 11 – Nov. 21 - Ecomodernism, Geoengineering***

Holly Jean Buck, 'Programming', *After Geoengineering: Climate Tragedy, Repair, and Restoration*, London: Verso, 2019, 211-39 (28 pgs.)

Jonathan Symons, 'Ecomodernism and its Critics', *Ecomodernism: Technology, Politics and the Climate Crisis*, Cambridge: Polity, 2019, 51-82 (31 pgs.).

### ***Week 12 – Nov. 28 - Degrowth, Green New Deal, Ecosocialism***

Aaron Bastani, 'Fully Automated Green Communism' (<https://novaramedia.com/2017/11/19/fully-automated-green-communism/>, 2017) (6 pgs.).

John Bellamy Foster, 'On Fire This Time', *Monthly Review*, 71(6), 2019, 1-17, (16 pgs. + 1 pg. refs.).

Robert Pollin, 'De-Growth vs. a Green New Deal', *New Left Review*, 112 (July/Aug), 2018, 5-25 (20 pgs.).

### ***Week 13 – Dec. 5 - Alternative Knowledges/Practices/Futures***

David Chandler and Julian Reid, 'Introduction: Becoming Indigenous', *Becoming Indigenous: Governing Imaginaries in the Anthropocene*, London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019, 1-22 (20 pgs + 2 pgs. refs.)

Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, 'Indigenous Peoples and the Fight for Survival', *This is Not a Drill: An Extinction Rebellion Handbook*, London: Penguin Books, 2019 (54-57) (4 pgs.).

Timothy Morton, 'You Are Being Tuned', *Being Ecological*, London: Pelican Books, 2018, 119-126 (8 pgs.).

Selections from Giacomo D'Alisa, Federico Demaria and Giorgos Kallis (eds), *Degrowth: A Vocabulary For A New Era*, London and New York: Routledge, 2015.

Giacomo D'Alisa, Marco Deriu and Federico Demaria, 'Care' (63-66) (4 pgs.).  
Silke Helfrich and David Bollier, 'Commons' (75-78) (4 pgs.).  
Marco Deriu, 'Conviviality' (79-82) (4 pgs.).  
Sylvia Lorek, 'Dematerialization' (83-85) (3 pgs.).  
Filka Sekulova, 'Happiness' (113-116) (4 pgs.).  
Serge Latouche, 'Imaginary, decolonization of' (117-120) (4 pgs.).  
Samuel Alexander, 'Simplicity' (133-136) (4 pgs.).  
Samuel Alexander, 'Basic and maximum income' (146-148) (3 pgs.).  
Nadia Johanisova, Ruben Suriñach Padilla and Philippa Parry, 'Co-operatives' (152-154) (3 pgs.).  
Sergi Cutillas, David Llistar and Gemma Tarafa, 'Debt audit' (156-158) (3 pgs.).  
Claudio Cattaneo, 'Eco-communities' (165-168) (4 pgs.).  
Chris Carlsson, 'Nowtopians' (182-184) (3 pgs.).  
Giacomo D'Alisa and Giorgos Kallis, 'Post-normal science' (185-188) (4 pgs.).

### **IMPORTANT POLICIES**

**Academic Consideration for Missed Work:** Students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation in order to receive accommodation for missed work worth 10% or more of the final grade in the course. All required documentation for absences must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty. Individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds or for other reasons.

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf). The student medical certificate is available at [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

**Religious Accommodation:** When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request accommodation for their absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the course instructor and the Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays (updated annually) at <https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>.

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

**Accessibility Options:** Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD)

[http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html)), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website: [www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/examinations/accommodated\\_exams.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/examinations/accommodated_exams.html)

**Scholastic Offences:** Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

**A Note on Plagiarism:** Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

**Plagiarism Checking:** All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).

**Mental Health:** Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western ([www.uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/index.html](http://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html)) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

Please visit the Social Science Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: [Academic Counselling - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#). Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html) .To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).