



**The University of Western Ontario
Department of Sociology**

**SOCIOLOGY 4471F-200
Sociology of Climate change
Fall 2026
Delivery Method – Blended**

Instructor: Dr. Kim Shuey
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This is a DRAFT copy only. Please see the course site for the final version.

Course Description:

This course will explore the root causes of anthropogenic climate change. Topics include environmental ethics and activist movements, conceptualizing human/nature relations, cultural perceptions of climate change, and transitioning to a post-carbon society.

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 requisites 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. This 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.

Anti-requisite(s): Sociology 4485F/G taught in 2020/2021

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

- * Demonstrate an understanding of the social dimensions of climate change from a sociological perspective.
- * Critically evaluate theoretical arguments and current research related to society's role in climate change and other environmental issues.
- * Analyze the relationships between social forces, social institutions and climate change
- * Develop critical and creative thinking & writing skills
- * Develop presentation skills (clearly express ideas and arguments orally & lead discussions)
- * Develop the ability to present and discuss ideas clearly and articulately through effective oral and written communication.

Course Material:

Technical Requirements: Stable internet connection, computer with working microphone and webcam.

Required Text(s): Articles and other materials used in this course will be publicly available, available through Western libraries, and/or through OWL Brightspace.

Communication:

Contact me directly via email at kshuey@uwo.ca

Students are responsible for checking the course [OWL Brightspace](#) site on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students enrolled in the course.

Course Schedule and Readings:

The reading list and weekly schedule is available on the course Brightspace site.

Method of Evaluation:

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

Evaluation Breakdown:

Class participation	25%
Reflection paper	15%
Seminar presentation and discussion leader	20%
Final project, due November 30th, 11:59pm	40%

A note about grades

You will not be permitted to do extra work, such as an extra assignment, in order to improve any part of, or your final grade. Student evaluations are designed and graded with great care, and while I welcome you to contact me to clarify my provided comments or ask questions about ways to improve, I do not change grades once they are assigned.

1. Class participation (25%)

This is a seminar course. Class periods will include a mix of my lecture and student-led discussion. It is critical that everyone read the assigned readings each week and come to class ready to actively participate in the discussion. Participation will be evaluated on both the quality and frequency of contribution.

2. Reflection paper (15%)

Uploaded to Brightspace by class time. The topic of your reflection paper must connect to the topic of the day's class. Approximately 1,000 words, including any necessary references, 12-point Times New Roman font, normal margins. References and in-text citations should follow [ASA or APA formatting](#). Working links to cited resources (other than class readings) need to be provided.

NOTE: Flexibility is built into this assignment. Students can choose the week they wish to write and submit their reflection. Because of this flexibility, and that reflections are tied to class topics, *due dates and times listed are firm* and additional requests for academic consideration will not be granted.

3. Seminar presentation and discussion leader (20%)

Each student will be required to deliver a presentation on an assigned reading. Sign up will occur the second week of class. *Students need to submit their notes/slides following their presentation, under the Assignments tab in OWL Brightspace.*

NOTE: Instructors are permitted to designate one assessment per course per term as requiring supporting documentation to receive academic consideration. For this course, the seminar presentation and discussion leader component has been designated as **requiring supporting documentation**. This is an important component of the class, and absence will impact the learning of the other students in the class. Presentation dates are chosen by students at the beginning of the term, and as a result, this assignment cannot be rescheduled to a different week. Those with approved medical accommodation for absence will be required to present to the instructor at a later time scheduled outside of class meeting in order to make-up this assignment.

4. Final project (40%) – Due November 30th, 11:59 pm

The final paper should be approximately 2500 words in length, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, including references. The assignment will be submitted to the OWL course site, including Turnitin.com for plagiarism checking. References should follow [ASA or APA formatting](#). In-text citations are needed to indicate the source of any information or statement that is not common knowledge. Reference lists need to be complete and accurate, with working links to the referenced items provided. See policy on use of AI, below.

****A** required portion of the final project is a short one-on-one discussion/Q&A with me held during the last class time. More details will be provided in class, and students will sign up for time slots closer to the end of the term. Students who do not complete this portion of the project will receive a 10-point deduction from their paper grade.

NOTE: Students are expected to submit the assignment by the deadline listed. Should illness or extenuating circumstances arise, or if students have accommodation for flexible deadlines through Accessible Education, students are permitted to submit their assignment up to 72 hours past the deadline without academic penalty. Should students submit their assessment beyond 72

hours past the deadline, a late penalty of 5 points per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade. As flexible deadlines are used in this course, additional requests for academic consideration will not be granted.

Student Absences:

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the [Academic Consideration Policy](#) regarding student absence requests and flexible deadlines.

Copyright:

Course material produced by faculty is copyrighted and to reproduce this material for any purposes other than your own educational use contravenes Canadian Copyright Laws. **Unless requested as part of an accommodation, you may not make audio or video recordings of lectures** – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.

Use of Generative AI:

Students are expected to write their essays and presentations in their own words. Students are permitted to use AI tools only for information gathering and as a starting point for exploring a topic. Students are **not permitted to include AI generated text in their essays or seminar presentation and represent it as their own writing**. In-text citations are needed to indicate the source of any information or statements that are not common knowledge. Reference lists need to be complete and accurate, and the referenced items need to be locatable. Written assignments must reflect the student's own thoughts and independent written work.



Department of Sociology
Effective September 1, 2026.

Academic Policies

Scholastic Offences: Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the [Scholastic Offences](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf) Policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf .

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.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the 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 Western University and Turnitin.com

Students are expected to retain all research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, your instructor may ask you to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against you.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Prior to any examination, students must turn their cellphones off and store them in their bags/coat at the front of the room. The use (or possession) of cellphones or other communications technologies during examinations is strictly prohibited. Those caught using a cell phone or other communication technologies, or even the physical possession of these technologies during an examination, will result in a zero on the examination in question. Similarly, the use (or possession) of these technologies during examination breaks (bathroom breaks during an exam) will also result in a zero. Intent does not matter. Forgetting to put away your cellphone or other communication technologies, whether during the examination or on examination breaks (bathroom breaks), are not justifications. It will result in a zero on the examination in question. In sum, your cellphones should never be seen or heard during an examination and should always be stored in your bags/coats at the front of the room.

Copyright: Students may not record or distribute any class activity, including conversations during office hours, without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student's own private use.

Code of Student Conduct: Every student is expected to comply with the provisions of the Code of Student Conduct. Sanctions for non-compliance range from a warning or reprimand to expulsion from the University. It is the responsibility of every student to read the Code and familiarize themselves with its contents. The Code is available at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/code_of_conduct.pdf.

Student Responsibility: Students in a degree program must select courses in accordance with the published requirements. Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded. Students must ensure course prerequisites have been completed successfully or special permission from the Dean is obtained. Students who fail to do so will be removed from the course without adjustments to fees. The decision may not be appealed.

Student Responsibility for Course Selection:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/general/academic_counselling.pdf

Registration and Progression:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/registration_progression.pdf

Graduation Requirements:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/graduation.pdf

Absence from Course Commitments: Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration](#) – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs
https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf.

Students missing regularly scheduled course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request using the Student Absence Portal (SAP) https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. **Note that supporting documentation is always required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams)** and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described in the course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness must include the completed Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical_certificate.pdf or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner. Students must request academic consideration as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

Procedure on makeup assessments for Social Science students and for courses offered by the Faculty of Social Science (Effective September 1, 2026):

If academic consideration is granted, students should consult the course outline for information regarding how the missed assessment will be addressed and follow any instructions provided by the instructor. At the instructor's discretion, the weight of a missed test/quiz or mid-term may be transferred to another assessment in the course, including the final exam, rather than requiring a makeup assessment. Reweighting is not available for missed final exams.

Students are entitled to **one makeup assessment opportunity** for a missed test/quiz, mid-term, or final exam supported by approved academic consideration. **No additional makeup opportunities will be provided.**

Makeup assessments represent the final opportunity to complete a missed course assessment. The course instructor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup test/exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test/exam will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test/exam.

What happens if I miss a makeup assessment as a Social Science student or in a course offered by the Faculty of Social Science?

Students who miss a makeup assessment are not eligible for an additional makeup opportunity. Depending on their circumstances, they may:

1. Remain enrolled in the course and accept a grade of zero on the missed makeup assessment. Students should consult the course outline and calculate whether they can still achieve a passing grade in the course.
2. Withdraw from the course through [Student Center](#) before the [published drop deadline](#). A course dropped before the deadline will result in a withdrawal (WDN) without academic penalty. Part-time students should consult the Registrar's Office [refund schedule](#) to determine whether a tuition refund is available. Students enrolled full-time in 4.0-5.0 courses are generally not eligible for tuition refunds when a course is dropped.
3. If the published drop deadline has passed and the missed makeup assessment is supported by appropriate documentation, students may submit their documentation through the [Student Absence Portal](#) to request a **WDN (withdrawal without academic penalty)**. Approval is not automatic and remains subject to Faculty review. Requests for a second makeup assessment will not be considered.

Students are encouraged to carefully consider their ability to complete a makeup assessment as scheduled, as no further opportunities to complete the missed work will be available.

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 Academic Advising Office.

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 Brightspace 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.

Guidelines for Grades/Marks: The Department of Sociology has grade distribution guidelines that all instructors are expected to follow. Generally, and with few exceptions, this means that the number of A's in a course cannot exceed the number of B's, and class means are expected to fall within a prescribed percentage range. This means that your final grade depends on your ranking relative to your peers. Courses with grades falling outside this range may be adjusted, up or down. These guidelines do not prohibit a student achieving 95% or higher in all their courses, but it does mean that an entire course cannot be made up of students receiving 95%. This policy combats grade inflation, contributing to higher standards, and ensuring uniformity across all courses of the same level. Motivated and hard-working students receive grades well above the course averages. The use of grade guidelines, including any adjustments of grades, either up or down for this purpose, cannot be used as the basis of an appeal.

Sociology 1000-Level

A's not to exceed B's

Means in the range of 68-72%

Sociology 2000-Level

A's not to exceed B's

Means in the range of 70-75%

Sociology 3000-Level

Means in the range of 73-80%

Sociology 4000-Level

Means in the range of 78-82%

Support Services:

- **Office of the Registrar Services** <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>
- **Faculty Academic Advising** - Please visit your Home Faculty Academic advising webpage for information regarding adding/dropping courses, important dates, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters
https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html .
- **USC services** – information available regarding student health/dental plan, LTC bus pass, food support services, Peer support Centre etc <http://westernusc.ca/services/> .
- **Mental health** – Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Mental Health@Western](#) <https://www.uwo.ca/health/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

- **Health & Wellness Services** – Registered part-time and full-time students can book a physical health appointment at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/shs/index.html>.
- **Accessible Education** provides support and services to students with disabilities at Western, in all programs and faculties. Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing.
- **Gender-Based and Sexual Violence** – Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experience GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts on the Wellness and Wellbeing website <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/index.html>. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.
- **Western Libraries** – Visit the many library locations on campus. Western Libraries provide access to material in physical and digital formats <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/catalogue/index.html>. Research support is also available <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/research/index.html>.
- **Writing Support Centre** – Online writing resources, writing support and writing modules are available to undergraduate students <https://writing.uwo.ca/undergrads/>.
- **Bookstore:** Search for Textbook/course material availability and cost <https://bookstore.uwo.ca/course-materials-textbooks/course-materials-and-textbooks>.