

October 8, 2020

Climate Politics and Governance
(POL S 403b)
Aseem Prakash
Fall 2020

Class Time:

Monday and Wednesday, 12:30-2:20

Please access zoom via Canvas

Online Office Hours:

By appointment

Course Objective

Climate change is perhaps the defining challenge of our time. Because it critically affects every aspect of our life, climate governance is complex and contested. There are several ways climate policies can support economic growth and create new opportunities. But climate policies can also create winners and losers and create social conflict. This undergraduate seminar will examine important policy issues in climate governance, such as mitigation and adaptation policies, climate migration, climate justice, and climate finance. We will examine how well the existing approaches and institutions are working and what new initiatives can help us respond to the climate challenge.

Readings

I have provided the article URL or uploaded the readings on Canvas. If not, please copy and paste the article title in <scholar.google.com> to check the possibility of downloading this article directly from the appropriate website.

Course Expectations

This course requires active student participation (if you are in a different time zone and will view the recorded seminar only, please get in touch with me). You are expected to energetically and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions in the following ways.

Writing Memos

Article memos

For every session, students will be assigned an article to present and critique. The discussant-presenter should prepare a two-page (single-spaced) “Article Memo” which summarizes the article, examines its strengths and weaknesses, and identifies questions it raises for future research. Please email this memo to me by Sunday noon for the Monday class, and by Tuesday noon for the Wednesday class. The discussant-presenter should budget about 10 minutes for the in-class oral presentation. In the course of this quarter, you will probably be assigned to present **2 or 3 articles**.

Key questions memo

I expect seminar participants to review all the assigned readings prior to the class. Based on these readings for a given session, you will write a “Key questions” memo. In this memo, identify two or three questions or issues that emerge from the assigned readings, along with a rationale as to why these questions are important. Your “Key Questions Memo” should be about one-page (single-spaced) and reach me by Sunday noon for the Monday class and by Tuesday noon for the Wednesday class.

I have divided the course into three modules with about seven class sessions for every module. You need to write 2 key question memos (for two different class sessions) from every module (this means **6 key question memos in total**). Think of Module 1. Suppose you like readings from session 3. After reading the articles assigned for this session, think of two or three overarching questions that you believe emerge from these readings and should be discussed in the class.

Please note: If you are assigned to present a specific article for session 3 (and writing an article memo), you will not write a key question memo for this session.

Research Paper

Identify two countries, cities, or firms and compare how they are responding to climate change. Specifically:

- Identify two units you wish to study;
- Briefly explain how they are similar or different (the rationale for comparing them)?
- Specify the policies (mitigation and/or adaptation) you will be comparing;
- Why are you focusing on these policies; what do you think they might reveal about these units' climate policies;
- Do you expect the responses of these units will be similar or different? Why?;
- The "therefore what?" question: how might this study move forward your understanding of climate policy.

Please write in regular prose and not in bullet points. One-page outline is due **October 28** and a five-page (single-spaced; excluding references and tables) research paper is due **December 9**. I recommend structuring your paper in sections and subsections.

We will also schedule presentations (10 minutes per student) towards the end of the quarter

Evaluation

In total, you can score 100 points. To convert this into 4-point scale, I will simply divide it by 25

Article Memos:	30 points (10 points per memo * 3 memos)
Key Questions Memos:	30 points (5 points per memo * 6 memos)
Class Participation:	20 points (pls contact me if you are in a different time zone)
Research Paper:	10 points
Research Presentation:	10 points

Total: 100 points

Note

I reserve the right to change the syllabus without prior notice.

Religious Accommodation

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Faculty Syllabus Guidelines and Resources.

Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form available at

<https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/>

Class Schedule

Module 1

Session 1

Wednesday, September 30

Introduction to the course

- Syllabus and course expectations
- Think You're Making Good Climate Choices? Take This Mini-Quiz
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/08/30/climate/climate-footprint-quiz.html?action=click&module=Editors%20Picks&pgtype=Homepage>

Session 2

Monday, October 5

Overview

- We Made Wildfire an Enemy for 110 Years. It Could Have Been an Ally.
https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/22/us/forest-fires-fighting-history.html?campaign_id=54&emc=edit_clim_20200923&instance_id=22456&nl=climate-fwd%3A®i_id=84813424&segment_id=38836&te=1&user_id=dd4629c858e97868e43a18e3a68e37b
- Both parties used to love the carbon tax. So why are they giving up on it?
<https://grist.org/politics/who-killed-the-carbon-tax-republicans-or-democrats/>
- Climate Strikes: What They Accomplish and How They Could Have More Impact
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/prakashdolsak/2019/09/14/climate-strikes-what-they-accomplish-and-how-they-could-have-more-impact/#7c5331805eed>
- Imagine Jair Bolsonaro Standing Trial for Ecocide at The Hague
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/21/sunday-review/bolsonaro-amazon-fire.html>
- Republicans embrace local environmental issues in competitive races
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/prakashdolsak/2020/09/23/republicans-embrace-local-environmental-issues-in-competitive-races/#7a2955d2e104>

Session 3

Wednesday, October 7

Perspective and approaches

- On the divergent American reactions to terrorism and climate change.
Canvas.
- Climate change and the Syrian civil war revisited.
Canvas.
- Tree planting 'has mind-blowing potential' to tackle climate crisis
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/04/planting-billions-trees-best-tackle-climate-crisis-scientists-canopy-emissions>
- 2020 New Year's Resolution: Fly Less
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/prakashdolsak/2019/12/26/2020-new-years-resolution-fly-less/#53fef21c101b>

Session 4

Monday, October 12

Opposition to climate mitigation

- Institutionalizing delay: foundation funding and the creation of US climate change counter-movement organizations.
Canvas
- Cool dudes: The denial of climate change among conservative White males in the United States.
Canvas
- Tracking the nuclear ‘mood’ in the United States: Introducing a long-term measure of public opinion about nuclear energy using aggregate survey data
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301421519304665>
- Tribes that live off Coal hold tight to Trump’s promises
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/01/us/trump-coal-promises.html>

Session 5

Wednesday, October 15

Barriers to climate response

- Confronting the “China Excuse:” The Political Logic of Climate Change Adaptation
<https://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/article/confronting-the-china-excuse-the-political-logic-of-climate-change-adaptation/>
- Americans Back Tough Limits on Building in Fire and Flood Zones
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/climate/flood-fire-building-restrictions.html?action=click&module=Latest&pgtype=Homepage>
- Jobs And Climate Change: America's (Rust) Belt And Road Initiative
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/prakashdolsak/2019/07/14/jobs-and-climate-change-americas-rust-belt-and-road-initiative/#60a8c5245f54>
- Wildfires Hasten Another Climate Crisis: Homeowners Who Can’t Get Insurance
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/02/climate/wildfires-insurance.html?action=click&module=Well&pgtype=Homepage§ion=Climate%20and%20Environment>
- Palm Oil Was Supposed to Help Save the Planet. Instead It Unleashed a Catastrophe.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/20/magazine/palm-oil-borneo-climate-catastrophe.html>

Session 6
Monday, October 19

New issues

- Carbon leakages through trade
https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/04/climate/outsourcing-carbon-emissions.html?em_pos=small&emc=edit_clim_20180905&nl=climate-fwd&nl_art=2&nlid=84813424c%3Dedit_clim_20180905&ref=headline&te=1
- Solar geoengineering as part of an overall strategy for meeting the 1.5 C Paris target.
Canvas
- The best case for and against a fracking ban, <https://www.vox.com/energy-and-environment/2019/9/12/20857196/kamala-fracking-ban-biden-climate-change>
- Coronavirus and global supply chain disruption: A wake-up call for climate policy?
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/prakashdolsak/2020/03/07/coronavirus-and-global-supply-chain-disruption-a-wake-up-call-for-climate-policy/#7d3c64221161>
- Industrial Agriculture, an Extraction Industry Like Fossil Fuels, a Growing Driver of Climate Change
https://insideclimatenews.org/news/25012019/climate-change-agriculture-farming-consolidation-corn-soybeans-meat-crop-subsidies?utm_source=InsideClimate+News&utm_campaign=421af59ce8-&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_29c928ffb5-421af59ce8-327930529

Module 2

Session 7
Wednesday, October 21

Adaptation

- Adaptation to climate change
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01944363.2010.502047?src=recsys>
- The politics of climate change adaptation
<https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev-environ-102017-025739>
- High mountain communities and climate change: adaptation, traditional ecological knowledge, and institutions.
Canvas

- In the waterlogged Netherlands, climate change is considered neither a hypothetical nor a drag on the economy. Instead, it's an opportunity.
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/06/15/world/europe/climate-change-rotterdam.html>

Session 8

Monday, October 26

Incorporating adaptation in the policy process

- Exploring the Adaptation-Mitigation Relationship: Does Information on the Costs of Adapting to Climate Change Influence Support for Mitigation?
Canvas
- Mainstreaming climate change adaptation into development: a case study of Bangladesh.
Canvas
- Barriers to Municipal Climate Adaptation: Examples From Coastal Massachusetts' Smaller Cities and Towns
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01944363.2014.949590?src=recsys>
- The Jersey shore would rather fight flooding with walls than retreat
<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2017-05-04/the-jersey-shore-would-rather-fight-flooding-with-walls-than-retreat>

Paper outline is due

Session 9

Wednesday, October 28

Droughts and climate change

- Heat and Drought Team Up More Frequently, With Disastrous Results
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/23/climate/heat-drought-climate-change.html>
- In southeastern Arizona, farms drill a half-mile deep while families pay the price
<https://www.azcentral.com/in-depth/news/local/arizona-environment/2019/12/05/wells-drying-up-around-willcox-where-effort-change-groundwater-rules-failed/2357906001/>
- Managing drought risk in a changing climate: The role of national drought policy.
Canvas

- Drought and water policy in Australia: Challenges for the future illustrated by the issues associated with water trading and climate change adaptation in the Murray–Darling Basin.
Canvas

Session 10

Monday, November 2

Climate migration

- What can we learn from the practice of development-forced displacement and resettlement for organised resettlements in response to climate change?
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0016718514002322?casa_token=yVpoTDLmKTgAAAAA:eIZZaQc5GChqU_c56yL2KUctIZue4QBYUB5iUCzCwrja7cHgZyOSeQ5pIxY1C9a-yAPB4uMYdQ
- The climate crisis, migration, and refugees
<https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-climate-crisis-migration-and-refugees/>
- Climate change as a migration driver from rural and urban Mexico.
Canvas.
- The impact of climate change on tribal communities in the US: displacement, relocation, and human rights.
Canvas.
- How climate migration will reshape America
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/09/15/magazine/climate-crisis-migration-america.html>

Session 11

Wednesday, November 4

Gender and climate change

- Effects of gender on climate change knowledge and concern in the American public.
Canvas.
- Virtue and vulnerability: Discourses on women, gender and climate change.
Canvas.
- Is adaptation to climate change gender neutral? Lessons from communities dependent on livestock and forests in northern Mali.
Canvas

- The Role of Gender and Caste in Climate Adaptation Strategies in Nepal
<https://bioone.org/journals/mountain-research-and-development/volume-31/issue-4/MRD-JOURNAL-D-10-00085.1/The-Role-of-Gender-and-Caste-in-Climate-Adaptation-Strategies/10.1659/MRD-JOURNAL-D-10-00085.1.full>

Session 12

Monday, November 9

Climate justice

- Just transition: Integrating climate, energy and environmental justice
Canvas
- The Cobalt Pipeline: Tracing the path from deadly hand-dug mines in Congo to consumers' phones and laptops
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/business/batteries/congo-cobalt-mining-for-lithium-ion-battery/>
- Carbon trading, co-pollutants, and environmental equity: Evidence from California's cap-and-trade program (2011–2015)
<https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1002604>
- Is carbon offsetting the solution? (Or part of the problem?)
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2007/jun/10/ethicalliving.carbonemissions>
- Urban Heatwaves Are Worse For Low-Income Neighborhoods
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/prakashdolsak/2020/08/14/urban-heatwaves-are-worse-for-low-income-neighborhoods/#560f3c0819d5>

Module 3

Wednesday, November 11

Veterans Day, No Class

Session 13

Monday, November 16

Climate insurance

- A global review of insurance industry responses to climate change.
Canvas.

- A broke, and broken, flood insurance program
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/04/business/a-broke-and-broken-flood-insurance-program.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=first-column-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news&r=0>
- Rising seas may wipe out these Jersey towns, but they're still rated AAA
<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-05-25/investors-say-it-s-time-to-price-climate-into-cities-bond-risks>
- A Managed decline for Oil-Dependent Regions: How sovereign wealth funds can support a just transition to clean energy.
https://www.sightline.org/2020/09/08/a-managed-decline-for-oil-dependent-regions/?utm_source=Sightline%20Institute&utm_medium=web-email&utm_campaign=Sightline%20News%20Selections

Session 14

Wednesday, November 18

Climate finance

- Here's How Cities Can Reduce Climate Change Risk
<https://riskandinsurance.com/how-cities-reduce-climate-change-risk/>
- Federal Report Warns of Financial Havoc From Climate Change
https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/08/climate/climate-change-financial-markets.html?utm_source=Sightline%20Institute&utm_medium=web-email&utm_campaign=Sightline%20News%20Selections
- Stranded assets and the fossil fuel divestment campaign: what does divestment mean for the valuation of fossil fuel assets?
Canvas
- An Oil Giant's Wall Street Fall: The World is Sending the Industry Signals, but is Exxon Listening?
https://insideclimatenews.org/news/26082020/exxon-mobil-dow-jones-industrial-wall-street-coronavirus-big-oil?utm_source=InsideClimate+News&utm_campaign=c89b87ec7a-&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_29c928ffb5-c89b87ec7a-327930529

Session 15
Monday, November 23
Consumer responsibility

- Consumers' preferences for carbon labels and the underlying reasoning. A mixed methods approach in 6 European countries
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617332304?casa_token=x7huiOL6eP8AAAAA:mZ7QxqiRq48Gk935TCXEiJP7kTyCC1gdf3igAS9ert8Ye7KXc1xQwop-IdqiiRyL2qp_PkKo4g
- Consumers underestimate the emissions associated with food but are aided by labels
Canvas
- Carbon labels in tourism: persuasive communication?
Canvas
- How SUVs conquered the world – at the expense of its climate
https://grist.org/climate/how-suvs-conquered-the-world-at-the-expense-of-its-climate/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=daily

Session 16
Wednesday, November 25
Business dimension

- Performative and political: Corporate constructions of climate change risk
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1350508415572038?casa_token=9ibudzGktv8AAAAA%3AYmOOngdpY3_CrMgPyCU_rDVXzhG3UDfI8Cg4mtOBPHuGt8glKMgcUqrrttEtB2IjFlZXWvdh_osQ
- A Friedman doctrine-- The Social Responsibility Of Business Is to Increase Its Profits
<https://www.nytimes.com/1970/09/13/archives/a-friedman-doctrine-the-social-responsibility-of-business-is-to.html>
- The impact of climate change on the pattern of demand for bottled water and non-alcoholic beverages.
Canvas
- Amazon's Climate Pledge: Greenwashing Or A Game-Changer?
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/prakashdolsak/2019/09/20/amazons-climate-pledge-greenwashing-or-a-game-changer/#684ef1a155b6>
- Strategic Responses to Changing Climate Change Policies: The Role Played by Carbon Accounting

https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/auar.12213?casa_token=JM-tkcQLJUkAAAAA%3AZ7d7_xpjlRElvbSHORzsXRzMAYWCzu4Q4lIdUE6FJhMhWHypqTnjeIFEy4DYKSw8AJtdUQGtI6AwOok

Session 17

Monday, November 30

In-class presentations

Session 18

Wednesday, December 2

In-class presentations

Session 19

Monday, December 7

In-class presentations

Research Paper is due

Session 20

Wednesday, December 9

In-class presentations