

Climate Politics and Governance
(POL S 458A)

Aseem Prakash
Fall 2024

Class:

Monday and Wednesday, 130-320, Savery 131

Office Hours:

By appointment, please email <aseem@uw.edu>

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

Readings are either uploaded on Canvas or I have provided the article URL.

This is a Device Free Class

Research suggests that the use of electronic devices in class can be distracting for you and for your colleagues. Therefore, to enhance your learning experience, during the class, you are not allowed to use phones, tablets, laptops or any Internet-connectable devices. Please take notes using a pen and a notebook.

Course Expectations

This course requires active student participation. You are expected to energetically and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions in the following ways.

Writing Memos

Article memos

For every session (except when we have guest speakers), students will be assigned an article to present and critique. The discussant-presenter should prepare a two-page (single-spaced) “Article Memo” that summarizes the article, examines its strengths and weaknesses, and identifies questions it raises for future research. Please email this memo to me by **Monday 9:00 am for the Monday afternoon class and by Wednesday 9:00 am for the Wednesday afternoon class**. The discussant-presenter should budget about 10 minutes for the in-class oral presentation (no PowerPoint). 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 Monday 9:00 am for the Monday afternoon class, and by Wednesday 9:00 am for the Wednesday afternoon 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 covered during class discussions.

Please note: If you are assigned to present a specific article for session 3 (and therefore write the 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 (note: you cannot write on the US, Washington state, California, Seattle, King County, and China). 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?
- Therefore what? How do you think this study might move forward your understanding of climate policy?

Please write in regular prose and not in bullet points. The one-page outline is due November 1 and a five-page (single-spaced; excluding references and tables) research paper is due December 6. I recommend structuring your paper into sections and subsections. We will also schedule presentations (15 minutes per student) towards the end of the quarter.

Evaluation

In total, you can score 100 points. To convert this into a 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
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 the 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 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 28

Syllabus and course expectations

1. Different approaches to reducing aviation emissions: reviewing the structure-agency debate in climate policy.
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s44168-022-00001-w>
2. Did your handbag help destroy the Rainforest?
<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/05/style/lvmh-nike-prada-amazon-deforestation.html>
3. Texas is the country's clean energy leader, almost in spite of itself
<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/17022022/inside-clean-energy-texas-clean-energy-leader/>
4. Why people aren't motivated to address climate change.
<https://hbr.org/2018/10/why-people-arent-motivated-to-address-climate-change>

5. Taylor Swift and climate change: Is the youth “Shaking Off” or embracing carbon-intensive lifestyles?
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/prakashdolsak/2023/08/02/taylor-swift-and-climate-change-is-the-youth-shaking-off-or-embracing-carbon-intensive-lifestyles/?sh=64159f425c08>

In class exercise

6. Think you’re making good climate choices? Take this mini-quiz
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/08/30/climate/climate-footprint-quiz.html>

Session 2

Monday, October 2

Overview

7. Carbon Capture Takes Center Stage, But Is Its Promise an Illusion?
<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/09032022/carbon-capture-and-storage-fossil-fuels-climate-change/>
8. Can we save the planet by shrinking the economy?
<https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/22408556/save-planet-shrink-economy-degrowth>
9. A wildfire may have forever changed this Colorado community — and who can afford to live there
<https://grist.org/wildfires/in-the-wake-of-a-wildfire-who-gets-to-rebuild-grand-county-colorado/>
10. A New York power line divided environmentalists. Here’s what it says about the larger climate fight.
<https://grist.org/energy/a-new-york-power-line-divided-environmentalists-heres-what-it-says-about-the-larger-climate-fight/>
11. Wildfire smoke is erasing progress on Clean Air.
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/09/22/climate/wildfire-smoke-pollution.html>

Session 3

Wednesday, October 4

Perspective and approaches

12. Climate change and the Syrian civil war revisited.
Canvas
13. This town's mining battle reveals the contentious path to a cleaner future
[https://www.technologyreview.com/2024/01/23/1086458/critical-Links to an external site.minerals-nickel-inflation-reduction-act-environmental-dangers/](https://www.technologyreview.com/2024/01/23/1086458/critical-links-to-an-external-site.minerals-nickel-inflation-reduction-act-environmental-dangers/)
14. Why California's housing market is destined to go up in flames
<https://grist.org/housing/california-housing-market-wildfire-climate-change/Links to an external site.>
15. The reckless policies that helped fill our streets with ridiculously large cars
<https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/24139147/suvs-trucks-Links to an external site.popularity-federal-policy-pollution>
16. The activists who embrace nuclear power
<https://www.newyorker.com/tech/annals-of-technology/the-activists-who-embrace-nuclear-powerLinks to an external site.>

Session 4

Monday, October 9

Ongoing Debates

17. The value of unrealistic targets: why some climate activists are unwilling to abandon the 1.5 °C target
https://www.nature.com/articles/s44168-024-00118-0?utm_source=rct_congratemail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=oa_20240422&utm_content=10.1038/s44168-024-00118-0#citeasThe

18. Deep-sea mining may soon ease the world's battery-metal shortage
<https://www.economist.com/science-and-technology/2023/07/02/deep-sea-mining-may-soon-ease-the-worlds-battery-metal-shortage>
19. When, where, and which climate activists have vandalized museums
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s44168-023-00054-5>
20. Climate clashes with labor: UAW strike reveals ESG problems.
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/prakashdolsak/2023/09/18/climate-clashes-with-labor-uaw-strike-reveals-esg-problems/?sh=1752db874a53>
21. 21. Did Exxon Make It Rain Today?
<https://www.thenewatlantis.com/publications/did-exxon-make-it-rain-today>

Session 5

Wednesday, October 11

Barriers to climate response

22. How climate change could spark the next home mortgage disaster
<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/11/30/climate-change-mortgage-housing-environment-433721>
23. African nations' dash for gas exposes division at the UN and 'hypocrisy' in Europe
<https://www.climatechangenews.com/2022/05/25/african-nations-dash-for-gas-exposes-division-at-the-un-and-hypocrisy-in-europe/>
24. How a European law might get companies around the world to cut climate pollution
<https://www.npr.org/2023/05/17/1171238285/how-a-european-law-might-get-companies-around-the-world-to-cut-climate-pollution>
25. 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>

26. The battle of Thacker Pass
<https://grist.org/climate/the-west-has-a-new-front-in-the-war-over-electric-cars/>

Session 6

Monday, October 16

Challenges in climate mitigation

27. Cool dudes: The denial of climate change among conservative White males in the United States.
Canvas
28. Advancing bipartisan decarbonization policies: lessons from state-level successes and failures.
Canvas
29. Do windy areas have more wind turbines: An empirical analysis of wind installed capacity in Native Tribal Nations.
<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0261752>
30. My Native Alaskan Community needs the Willow Oil Project
https://www.wsj.com/articles/my-native-alaskan-community-needs-the-willow-oil-project-inupiat-gas-subsistence-municipal-government-economy-11664220998?mod=hp_opin_pos_5#cxrecs_s
31. Varieties of just transition: Public support in South Africa's Mpumalanga coal community for different policy options
<https://journals.plos.org/climate/article?id=10.1371/journal.pclm.000205>

Module 2

Session 7

Wednesday, October 18

New issues

32. Solar geoengineering and climate change
<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47551>
33. The Rise and Fall of ESG. Forbes.com, April 23.
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/prakashdolsak/2024/04/23/the-rise-and-fall-of-esg/?sh=3e750ace74d9>Links to an external site.
34. Legal experts define a new global crime: Ecocide
<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/22062021/ecocide-definition-panel-international-crime/>Links to an external site.
35. Justice or overreach? As crucial test looms, Big Greens are under fire
<https://www.politico.com/news/2022/06/19/big-green-justice-environment-00040148>Links to an external site.
36. The failure to decarbonize the global energy education system:
Carbon lock-in and stranded skill sets
Canvas

Session 8

Monday, October 23

Climate Anxiety

Guest Speaker: Dr. Robert Berley

37. Apocalypse When? (Not) thinking or talking about climate change.
Canvas
38. Resources for working with Climate emotions - A collaboration between Gen Dread and The All We Can Save Project.
40. Recognizing Eco-Anxiety - What It Is and Ways You Might Be Affected. *Canvas*

Session 9

Wednesday, October 25
Business and Climate Change

40. Raising the bar: What determines the ambition level of corporate climate targets?
Canvas
41. Pope Francis, climate message, and meat tax: evidence from survey experiment in Italy.
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s44168-023-00040-x>
42. The impact of climate change on the pattern of demand for bottled water and non-alcoholic beverages.
Canvas
43. Carbon labels in tourism: persuasive communication?
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s44168-023-00040-x>
Links to an external site.
44. Filling the climate governance gap: Do corporate decarbonization initiatives matter as much as state and local government policy? *Canvas*

Session 10
Monday, October 30
Adaptation

45. The politics of climate change adaptation
<https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev-environ-102017-025739>
46. High mountain communities and climate change: adaptation, traditional ecological knowledge, and institutions. *Canvas*
47. Pesticides, Heat, and the People Who Feed Us: Climate Change Is Making Farmworkers' Dangerous Job Even Worse

<https://blog.ucsusa.org/rafter-ferguson/pesticides-heat-farmworkers/>

48. 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>
49. How the world's favorite conservation model was built on colonial violence
<https://grist.org/indigenous/30x30-world-conservation-model-colonialism-indigenous-peop/>

Paper outline is due

Session 11

Wednesday, November 1

Incorporating adaptation in the policy process

50. Exploring the adaptation-mitigation relationship
Canvas
51. Outdoor recreation and climate adaptation
<https://houserepublicans.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/OrcaPlanReport-FINAL-112421.pdf>
52. Lessons from New York: What makes a community turn against climate adaptation?
<https://grist.org/climate/lessons-from-new-york-what-makes-a-community-turn-against-climate-adaptation/>
53. 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>

54. Can burying power lines prevent California's next big wildfire?
<https://grist.org/wildfires/can-burying-power-lines-prevent-california-next-wildfire-pge/>

Session 12

Monday, November 6

Droughts and climate change

55. How America's Diet Is Feeding the Groundwater Crisis
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/12/24/climate/groundwater-crisis-chicken-cheese.html>
56. 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/>
57. Water Security in Africa in the Age of Global Climate Change.
Canvas
58. First solar canal project is a win for water, energy, air and climate in California,
<https://theconversation.com/first-solar-canal-project-is-a-win-for-water-energy-air-and-climate-in-california-177433>
59. The effects of extreme drought on climate change beliefs, risk perceptions, and adaptation attitudes
Canvas

Module 3

Session 13

Wednesday, November 8

Climate migration

60. Climate change as a migration driver from rural and urban Mexico.
Canvas
61. Why ‘climate havens’ might be closer to home than you’d think
<https://grist.org/migration/climate-havens-national-climate-assessment-midwest-migration/>
62. Welcoming climate refugees to the United States: Do attitudes depend on refugee origins, numbers, or permanence? *Canvas*.
63. Gender and climate change-induced migration: proposing a framework for analysis
<https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/7/2/025601/pdf>
64. Willingness to Help Climate Migrants: A Survey Experiment in the Korail Slum of Dhaka, Bangladesh.
<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0249315>

Session 14

Monday, November 13

Gender and climate change

65. Effects of gender on climate change knowledge and concern in the American public.
Canvas
66. Virtue and vulnerability: Discourses on women, gender and climate change.
Canvas
67. Is adaptation to climate change gender neutral? Lessons from communities dependent on livestock and forests in northern Mali.
Canvas
68. Gender in climate change, agriculture, and natural resource policies: insights from East Africa

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10584-019-02447-0>

69. Uncertain predictions, invisible impacts, and the need to mainstream gender in climate change adaptations
Canvas

Session 15

Wednesday, November 15

Climate justice

70. Three faces of climate justice.
<https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051120-125514>
71. The controversies at the heart of California's solar net-metering fight
<https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/solar/the-controversies-at-the-heart-of-californias-solar-net-metering-fight>
72. Can California's Cap and Trade Actually Address Environmental Justice?
<https://www.yesmagazine.org/environment/2020/11/20/california-pollution-cap-trade>
73. Win-win REDD+ approaches belie carbon-biodiversity trade-offs.
Canvas
74. 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/#56of3c0819d5> .

Session 16

Monday, November 20

Climate finance and insurance

75. Wildfires Hasten Another Climate Crisis: Homeowners Who Can't Get Insurance

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/02/climate/wildfires-insurance.html>

76. World Bank climate funding greens African hotels while fishermen sink
<https://www.climatechangenews.com/2024/04/16/world-bank-climate-funding-greens-african-hotels-while-fishermen-sink/>Links to an external site.
77. Signaling climate resilience to municipal bond markets: does membership in adaptation-focused voluntary clubs affect bond rating? *Canvas*
78. How to Slow Climate Change While Fighting Poverty
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/11/07/cop27-green-aid-slow-climate-change-while-fighting-poverty/>
79. 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/>

Session 17

Wednesday, November 23

Virtual class over zoom

Session 18

Monday, November 27

In-class presentations

Session 19

Wednesday, November 29

In-class presentations

Session 20

Monday, December 4

In-class presentations

Research Paper is due

Session 21

Wednesday, December 6

In-class presentations