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NRSM 326.01: Climate and Society

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NRSM 326 Climate and Society

Fall 2022, MWF 1-1:50 pm, LA 011

Instructor: Laurie Yung

laurie.yung@umontana.edu

Office hours: By appointment (please email to schedule – I am always happy to meet)

Course Description

This course examines the relationship between climate and society, with a focus on interactions across scales and different dimensions of society. The course draws on a range of social science disciplines to explain social vulnerability, the politics of climate change, communication and behavior change, adaptation and land management, and systems and transformations. The goal of the course is to advance student understanding of climate change as a complex problem and the ways in which social science insights can contribute to solutions. Students learn to use social theory and social science research to develop social vulnerability assessments, climate communication campaigns, community energy transition plans, and public planning processes for climate resilience.

Course Objectives

Students in this course will:

1. Understand the core social and political components of climate change, and how to use that knowledge to advance effective communication, mitigation, adaptation, and transformation.
2. Learn how to apply key insights from social science to the problem of climate change and to integrate these insights into communications, planning, and decision-making.
3. Improve writing, speaking, and analytical skills.

More specifically, students will:

- a) Apply complex systems thinking to climate change and climate solutions.
- b) Examine the concept of social vulnerability and the process of social vulnerability assessment to understand the uneven impacts of climate change.
- c) Understand the social, political, and psychological processes that explain why climate change is politically polarized.
- d) Use findings from communication science and behavioral science to develop climate communications campaigns.
- e) Learn strategies to build resilience in different sectors and communities and develop processes to engage the public in resilience planning.
- f) Explore adaptation options for land managers and agricultural producers.
- g) Analyze proposed energy transitions and societal transformations, across local to global scales, and develop plans for community-scale energy transitions.

As an advanced writing course, students will:

- Identify and pursue more sophisticated questions for academic inquiry
- Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information effectively from diverse sources
- Manage multiple perspectives as appropriate
- Recognize the purposes and needs of discipline-specific audiences and adopt the academic voice necessary for the chosen discipline

- Use multiple drafts, revision, and editing in conducting inquiry and preparing written work
- Follow the conventions of citation, documentation, and formal presentation appropriate to that discipline
- Develop competence in information technology and digital literacy

Flipped Classroom Structure

Some portions of this course are structured as a flipped classroom. Many of the course materials (e.g. readings, recorded lectures, other videos) are provided via Moodle and the expectation is that students will complete this material prior to class meetings. This enables us to utilize most of our classroom time for more active learning, where we can practice applying concepts, hone analytic skills, and engage in deliberation. It is very important that students understand that course material and reflections must be completed prior to class meetings.

Course Readings and Videos

Required Course textbook: Leichenko, R. and K. O'Brien. (2019) *Climate and Society: Transforming the Future*. Polity Press. Cambridge, U.K.

Additional course readings, recorded lectures, and videos will be available on Moodle/UMOnline.

Please be prepared to pay approximately \$10 to rent films.

As noted above, readings and videos must be completed prior to class meetings. To adequately prepare for class, students need to read/watch this material, taking notes to prepare for class. Students should be familiar with the “facts” outlined in the readings and videos (who, what, when, where, how, etc.) and carefully analyze and critique the material presented. As you are reading and watching, make notes related to any discussion question(s) that have been provided, as well as key points, questions you have, interesting issues raised, and connections to other topics being covered in the course.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (8.29-9.2)	Models of Climate and Society
Week 2 (9.6-9.9)	Social Impacts and Vulnerability
Week 3 (9.12-9.16)	Social Vulnerability Assessment
Week 4 (9.19-9.23)	Public Views of Climate Change

9.23 Social Vulnerability Assessment Paper Due by Midnight (submit via Moodle)

Week 5 (9.26-9.30)	The Politics of Climate Change
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9.30 1-1:50 pm Exam #1 via Moodle (exam covers content from weeks 1-5)

Week 6 (10.3-10.9) The Science of Climate Communications

Week 7 (10.10-10.14) Mitigation and Human Behavior

10.12 and 10.14 No Class – Online Learning Days

Week 8 (10.17-10.21) Individual Versus/And System Change

10.21 Climate Communications Campaign DRAFT Due by Midnight (submit via Moodle)

Week 9 (10.24-10.28) The Social Side of Energy

Week 10 (10.31-11.4) Community Energy Transitions

11.4 1-1:50 pm Exam #2 via Moodle (exam covers content from weeks 6-10)

Week 11 (11.7-11.10) Prehistoric Adaptation

Week 12 (11.14-11.18) Tribal and Community Resilience

11.18 Climate Communications Campaign REVISION Due by Midnight (submit via Moodle)

Week 13 (11.21) Community Resilience, Cont. – *No Class - Online Learning Day*

Week 14 (11.28-12.2) Adaptation and Resilience on Public Lands

Week 15 (12.5-12.9) Adaptation, Agriculture, and Food Systems Transformation

12.12 1:10-3:10 pm Exam #3 (exam covers content from weeks 11-15)

12.15 Planning Process Paper Due by Midnight (submit via Moodle)

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment	Percent of Grade	Due Date
Attendance/Participation/In-Class Presentations	10%	Ongoing
Reflections on Moodle	10%	Ongoing
Exam #1	10%	9/30/22
Exam #2	10%	11/4/22
Exam #3	10%	12/12/22

Assignment	Percent of Grade	Due Date
Social Vulnerability Assessment	15%	9/23/22
Climate Communications Campaign DRAFT <i>Not graded but lose points if fail to submit</i>		10/21/22
Climate Communications Feedback Provided by Instructors		11/4/22
Climate Communications Campaign REVISION	20%	11/18/22
Planning Process Paper	15%	12/15/22

All assignments should be submitted via Moodle.

Important Note: Instructors will make every effort to ensure the accuracy of the Moodle gradebook. However, please note that Moodle gradebooks have limitations and student grades may not always be accurate.

Papers

There are three major written assignments for this course. In the first paper (2-3 page double spaced), students will design a social vulnerability assessment, including identifying metrics for measuring social vulnerability for a specific decision. In the second paper (4-5 pages double spaced), students will design a climate communications campaign with a specific goal and audience in mind. Students will submit a draft of their second paper for feedback and then submit a revision that integrates that feedback. In the third paper (3-4 pages double spaced), students will design a climate adaptation or resilience planning process for public lands or a community. In each of these papers, students will utilize social theory and social science research to develop a tool that could be used for real-world problem solving. Detailed guidelines for these assignments will be posted on Moodle.

Exams

There will be three exams (none are cumulative). Instructors will make every effort possible to post study guide questions each week to help students prepare for the exam. Exam questions will be almost entirely pulled from the large bank of study guide questions. Exams will be taken remotely via Moodle on 9/30 (1-1:50), 11/4 (1-1:50), and 12/11 (1:10-3:10). Students must take the exams at those dates and times (except in cases of a family or medical emergency, or other extenuating circumstances). Students can take the exams at a location of their choosing (e.g. apartment, dorm room, computer lab).

Reflections and Responses

Throughout the course, students will be required to respond to some of the readings, lectures, and videos by providing short reflections on Moodle. When reflections are required, there will be a question following a specific reading, lecture, or video and a target length will be provided (e.g. 3-5 sentences). Please note that reflections must be completed by 10:00 am on the date they are due (or points will be deducted).

Participation and Attendance

PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY! Participation grades will be based on attendance, punctuality, coming to class prepared, active engagement during class discussions and debates, and group presentations. Attendance will be taken at every class. Students with unexcused absences will

have the opportunity to make up the material through substantial, time-consuming additional assignments. More than three unexcused absences with no make-up assignments completed will result in a zero in participation (and thus a 10% reduction in the student's final grade). More than six unexcused absences will automatically result in an F in the course, with no options to do make-up assignments.

HOWEVER, in cases where students have family or medical emergencies, or other legitimate reasons for missing class, I am always willing to make alternative arrangements and accommodations, on a case-by-case basis. Please communicate with me if something is interfering with your attendance so we can troubleshoot! I am very happy to work with students who are experiencing difficult circumstances.

COVID! If you need to miss class due to any of the following, I will work with you to make up the content in a timely manner so you can continue to make progress in the course: (1) you test positive for COVID and need to isolate, (2) you have COVID symptoms and you are being responsible and staying home until you get your test results, or (3) your kids test positive or need to quarantine, and you need to stay home to take care of them. I will work with students in any of these situations on appropriate make-up assignments.

Grading Scale

Final course grades will be determined based on the following scale:

93-100 A
90-92 A-
88-89 B+
83-87 B
80-82 B-
78-79 C+
73-77 C
70-72 C-
68-69 D+
63-67 D
60-62 D-
59- F

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Please see Participation and Attendance above for details about course attendance policy.

Late Assignments

Points will be deducted for late reflections, presentations, and papers (the later you turn them in, the more points you will lose), but please note that better late than never definitely applies (i.e. it's better to get some credit for an assignment rather than none at all). If you have a family or medical emergency, or another legitimate reason to submit assignments late, please talk with me as soon as possible. Please reach out if you are finding it difficult to keep up! I will take

your circumstances into account and we can make alternative arrangements, but please know that I may ask for documentation.

Equal Access to Instruction and Office of Disability Equity

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and the Office for Disability Equity (ODE). If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability, please contact the ODE at: (406) 243-2243, ode@umontana.edu, or visit www.umt.edu/disability for more information. Retroactive accommodation requests will not be honored, so please, do not delay. As your instructor, I will work with you and the ODE to implement an effective accommodation, and you are welcome to contact me privately if you wish.

Cultural Leave Policy

Cultural or ceremonial leave allows excused absences for cultural, religious, and ceremonial purposes to meet the student's customs and traditions or to participate in related activities. To receive an authorized absence for a cultural, religious or ceremonial event the student or their advisor (proxy) must submit a formal written request to the instructor. This must include a brief description (with inclusive dates) of the cultural event or ceremony and the importance of the student's attendance or participation. Authorization for the absence is subject to approval by the instructor. Appeals may be made to the Chair, Dean, or Provost. The excused absence or leave may not exceed five academic calendar days (not including weekends or holidays). Students remain responsible for completion or make-up of assignments as defined in the syllabus, at the discretion of the instructor.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#). Please be aware that plagiarism is a violation of the student conduct code and will not be tolerated in this course. If a student plagiarizes, their course grade will be impacted and the UM Dean of Students will be notified. If you aren't entirely certain what constitutes plagiarism is, please see these excellent resources:

[Plagiarism Web Link](#)

[Writing Center Link](#)

[Owl English Purdue Link](#)

[Owl English Purdue Resource Link](#)

Grading Option

Please note that this class is offered for traditional letter grade only; it is not offered under the credit/no credit option.

Deadlines and Resources

Important Dates Restricting Opportunities to Drop a Course Fall 2021

Please see these two webpages for information on drop deadlines and the process for dropping a course: <https://www.umt.edu/registrar/students/drop-add/default.php> and

<https://www.umt.edu/registrar/calendar/autumn.php>

Career Readiness

The Franke College of Forestry and Conservation is committed to the career success of our students and encourages you to participate in [ElevateU](#) – UM’s signature career readiness program – to ensure that you graduate career-ready, with the education, skills, and tools needed to launch, carry-on, and pivot your post-graduation career. Participation in ElevateU is free and can be started at any time, no matter where you are in your academic or career journey. Get started by creating a profile on [Handshake](#) to search for jobs and internships or by [scheduling an appointment](#) with an [Experiential Learning and Career Success \(ELCS\)](#) career coach or advisor.

Food and Housing Insecurity

Any student who faces challenges securing food or housing, and believes that this could affect their performance in this course, is urged to contact any or all of the following campuses resources:

Food Pantry Program

UM offers a food pantry that students can access for emergency food. The pantry is open on Tuesdays from 12 to 5 PM and Fridays from 10 AM to 5 PM. The pantry is located in UC 119 (in the former ASUM Childcare offices). Pantry staff operate several satellite food cupboards on campus (including one at Missoula College). For more information about this program, email umpantry@mso.umt.edu, visit the [UM Food Pantry website](#) or contact the pantry on social media (@pantryUm on twitter, @UMPantry on Facebook, um_pantry on Instagram).

ASUM Renter Center

The Renter Center has compiled a [list of resources](https://medium.com/griz-renter-blog) (<https://medium.com/griz-renter-blog>) for UM students at risk of homelessness or food insecurity. Students can schedule an appointment with Renter Center staff to discuss their situation and receive information, support, and referrals.

TRiO Student Support Services

TRiO serves UM students who are low-income, first-generation college students or have documented disabilities. TRiO services include a textbook loan program, scholarships and financial aid help, academic advising, coaching, and tutoring.

Students can [check their eligibility](http://www.umt.edu/trioss/apply.php) (www.umt.edu/trioss/apply.php) for TRiO services online. If you are comfortable, please come see members of the teaching team. We will do our best to help connect you with additional resources.