

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY
in partnership with the Gap Year Association (GYA)

ESM 199: Climate Change and Its Impacts

COURSE SYLLABUS

CREDITS: 4 quarter-credits – Continuous Enrollment Course

Students who plan to use this course to fulfill specific requirements should discuss transfer options and obtain written approval from a counselor or study abroad advisor at their own college/university PRIOR to enrolling in this course.

PREREQUISITES:

There are NO prerequisites for this course.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION:

This course is a field-based self-study. The course instructor will correspond with the student and provide written feedback on course assignments via email and other remote communication.

INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD:

PSU has approved the following Instructors of Record, one of whom will be assigned to you (typically two+ weeks prior to the beginning of your program):

- Britt Basel, MS - brittbasel@ecothropic.com
 - Dianna Hahn, MA - dianna@gapyearassociation.org
 - Alexander Papouchis, MS - alexpapouchis@gmail.com
 - Cam Sylvester, MA – ccamsylvester@gmail.com
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will provide hands-on learning opportunities for undergraduate students who undertake study-away opportunities. It offers the student an opportunity to learn firsthand how climate change impacts local ecosystems and the people who depend on them. Through travel and service-learning, the course will equip students with an awareness about the global impacts of climate change. During their travels, students will be able to identify local impacts of rising CO₂ emissions, and how multiple climate change issues can compound for great effect.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

- **Environment of Respect:** Disagreement and diversity of opinions are encouraged. You will be challenged to think critically about the impact of cultural differences, which may emerge in concepts of gender, race, the roles environment has in business and market development, socioeconomic status, physical and cognitive ability, sexuality, and other forms of diversity. You are encouraged to ask difficult questions and engage in discussion and critical reflection. Please be respectful of others, listen, and try to understand differences.
- **Experiential Learning:** In this course, learning is an experiential process in which you will have the opportunity to reflect on your experiences throughout the term. The richness of the course will depend on the questions, insights, and active participation that you bring.
- **Personal Responsibility:** You are expected to engage fully in the coursework and take action if you need help. Please communicate any concerns about assignments, deadlines, or course activities to your Instructor of Record.
- **Academic Integrity:** Please adhere to university policies. Take special note of policies regarding

plagiarism and course withdrawal. Each student is expected to prepare their own assignments, and any assignments submitted should be the sole work of the student. Academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information, will not be tolerated. PSU's Code of Student Conduct may be found at <https://www.pdx.edu/dean-student-life/psu-code-student-conduct-and-responsibility>

STUDENT OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Understand more fully issues of sustainability and climate change in the developing world.
- Relate the importance of climate change to the survival of global ecosystems.
- Build, take part in building, and learn about alternative carbon-conscious practices (ie, greenhouse gases, carbon offsets, alternative energy sources, ecosystem management, climate adaptation strategies, climate mitigation strategies, etc.).
- Interview first-hand, people who have been impacted by climate change related impacts, and/or environmental managers, to learn about current impacts and strategies.
- Experience and learn about the inherent tensions between local populations and their needs, balanced with issues of environmental conservation and climate change.
- Select articles and journals related to the travel/study experience and analyze them critically.

CONTACT HOURS, EXCURSIONS, AND METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

A total of **40 contact hours** will be facilitated. These hours will come in the forms of:

- On-site instruction with local guides, group field trips, independent travel, and guest speakers.
- Books, periodicals, and videos provided by on-site organization/tour operator/field instructors.
- Volunteering with environmental conservation projects (ie, reforestation, solar, wind, and other carbon-neutral energy strategies, censusing of local fauna and flora, etc.).
- Introduction to, and volunteering on alternative energy projects and methods with a focus on understanding local impacts, as well as mitigation and adaptation strategies.
- Interviews with local inhabitants.
- Optional: Students will use the Internet to access resources and evaluate information sources according to the external criteria, such as the author's credentials, the timeliness of the information, the genre of the source, etc.

ASSIGNMENTS

REQUIRED HOURS: You must complete 40 contact hours as described above. The Gap Year Association will provide verification of hours.

DAILY JOURNAL: The journal requirement is an important component of your grade for this course. It will count for 30% of your final grade. Elements that make a strong journal include self-reflection and evidence of critical thinking.

If you are enrolled in multiple courses, you are only required to **maintain one journal for all courses**

Journals should be **handwritten and legible**, as handwritten reflections tend to be deeper and more insightful than those maintained digitally. Additionally, many programs have limitations to device usage in different locations; as such, a typed version may not be an option.

Journals will be graded as follows:

- **Self-reflection (20%):** Ask yourself critical questions about the experience you are having. How is this different from what you expected? What personal challenges are you experiencing? How are you learning and growing from this experience?

- **Reflection about your location and host culture (20%):** What is similar to and/or different from your home culture/environment? What is unique about this place/location? How is your day-to-day experience and learning in the host culture challenging or validating your worldviews?
- **Sharing reflections on group dynamics (20%):** What lessons can you take away from the experience you are having with your cohort? How are you developing or changing within the group?
- **Reflection on specific course themes (20%):** Review the student outcomes from the courses you are registered for. In your journal entries, speak directly about your inquiry and learning related to those course themes.
- **Quality & Consistency (20%):** Journaling every day or every few days with focus on the above elements will lead to higher quality journals and a better overall journal grade.

REQUIRED READING: You must read at least ONE book from the Recommended Reading list and demonstrate knowledge learned and/or perspectives expressed (with [MLA](#) or [APA](#) citations) in your FINAL REPORT.

A **FINAL REPORT** of insights gained from your study-away experience is required in order to complete the course. **Our expectation is that the paper you submit will reflect college-level writing.** Your report should be 8-10 pages in length. Reports must be typed (double spaced) with a cover page that includes your name, the academic quarter (e.g. fall 2021), the name of the program you attended, and the course number.

Submit a comprehensive analysis of how climate change is impacting the place that you visited. You may write about one particular service learning or volunteer opportunity (sustainable agriculture, animal conservation, eco-system protection, alternative energy, resource conservation and material recycling, etc.), exploring how rising CO2 emissions compound to create challenges for the organization.

Alternatively, you may write broadly about local impacts and the challenges facing the community due to direct results of climate change. As you write your report, you should consider a variety of factors, including economy, land use, agriculture, land development, conservation efforts, and other factors that speak to the urgency of climate change and its impacts on communities at large.

Final Report will be graded as follows:

- Description of organization and mission—10%
- Research and analysis of climate change impacts—30%
- Analysis of how rising CO2 emissions directly impacts this location/organization —20%
- Clarity and Organization of Ideas—20%
- Grammar and Punctuation—10%
- Ability to Demonstrate Knowledge from the Required Readings—10%

DEADLINES & SUBMISSIONS:

All course requirements must be submitted by:

- Fall Semester: January 20th
- Spring Semester: June 20th

SUBMITTING JOURNALS & FINAL REPORTS:

- **Journals:** Once complete, please capture legible images/scans of your handwritten journal and submit as **ONE COMPLETE** document via email/shared drive to your instructor. Instructors reserve the right to refuse your journal submission if it is not legible. Some tips for quality submission when photographing or scanning your journal:
 - Ensure adequate light

- Use equal camera height/distance if taking photos of journal
- Turn OFF the flash
- Pay attention to shadows and reflections
- Ensure the entire page is captured and sections are not cut off (even margins)!
- **Final report:** Please email or share your final report with your Instructor of Record

COURSE EVALUATION:

- **Daily Journal** (30% of total course grade): Evaluation criteria include, but are not limited to, clearly presented ideas and observations, creative thought, and relevant concepts.
- **Final Paper** (70% of total course grade): Evaluation criteria include, but are not limited to, appropriate grammar and verb use, format, content relevance, organization, analysis, originality, and summarization skills.
- **Required Readings:** This is a requirement for successful completion of this class and 10% of your paper grade depends on your referencing examples and lessons learned. Citations are required.
- **Required Hours:** The Gap Year Association will provide verification of these hours.
- **Grading:** This course is graded with letter grades A - F. See more details about PSU's grading system [here](#).

READING LIST

Students must read and cite at least ONE book in the final assignment. The following books have been approved for this course. Any other books not on this list must first be approved by your Instructor of Record.

ALL REGIONS:

Cradle to Cradle, by William McDonough and Michael Braungart

A manifesto for a radically different philosophy and practice of manufacture and environmentalism.

Manifestos on the Future of Food and Seed, by Vandana Shiva

A short collection of essays about what we eat and how we grow it.

Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit, by Vandana Shiva

The story of activists who are fighting corporate maneuvers to control access to water.

The Sixth Extinction: an Unnatural History, by Elizabeth Kolbert

A book about the future of the world, and the mass extinction unfolding before our eyes.

The Lexus and the Olive Tree, by Thomas L. Friedman

An exploration of how technology, capital, and information are transforming the global marketplace and erasing old geographic and geopolitical boundaries.

The World Without Us. Authors, by Alan Weisman

If human beings disappeared instantaneously from the Earth, what would happen? Alan Weisman draws on every field of science to present an environmental assessment of a world without humans.

(Fiction) *Ecotopia*, by Ernest Callenbach

William Weston, a young journalist, visits Ecotopia, an energy-efficient mini city with no urban sprawl, pollution, and a female dominated government and is determined to report his findings objectively.

Merchants of Doubt, by Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway

Tells the controversial story of how a loose-knit group of high-level scientists and scientific advisers, with deep connections in politics and industry, ran effective campaigns to mislead the public and deny well-established scientific knowledge over four decades.

The New Geography of Jobs, by Enrico Morretti

Brain Hubs, Manufacturing Hubs, and the Rest of America: for the past thirty years, the three Americas have been growing apart at an accelerating rate. This divergence is one the most important developments in the history of the United States and is reshaping the very fabric of our society, affecting all aspects of our lives, from health and education to family stability and political engagement

Principles of Environmental Justice, published by the National Resource Defense Council: Delegates to the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit
A one-page Bill of Rights for Environmental Justice

Climate Justice & Energy Democracy: A Platform Vision, published by the Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy (CEED), Dr. Cecilia Martinez, Shalini Gupta

This Energy Democracy Platform Vision was commissioned by the Climate Justice Alliance (CJA) as a guide and unifying platform of principles for the social movement transition from an extractive energy economy to a sustainable regenerative economy – one that is rooted in social, economic and environmental justice.

Drawdown, by Paul Hawken

Drawdown maps, measures, models, and describes the 100 most substantive solutions to global warming. For each solution, we describe its history, the carbon impact it provides, the relative cost and savings, the path to adoption, and how it works.

The Omnivore's Dilemma, by Michael Pollan

Through an analysis that interlaces history, science, and sociology, Pollan explores how America has shifted priorities around the economics of a single crop and the implications this has on production and consumption of many products.

This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate, by Naomi Klein

Klein argues that our addiction to carbon is fueling our inability to radically tackle the biggest problem of our time. Climate change is a wake-up call delivered through severe weather events. Klein further explores how it is interwoven through poverty and development.

CENTRAL AMERICA:

Fire In The Turtle House: The Green Sea Turtle and the Fate of the Ocean, by Osha Gray Davidson

Sea turtles have existed since the time of the dinosaurs. But now, suddenly, the turtles are dying, due to mysterious plague.

Savage Shore: Life and Death with Nicaragua's Last Shark Hunters, by Edward Marriott

The true story of Edward Marriott's journeys with the last surviving shark fishermen-a fierce ethnic brew of black Caribs, Nicaraguan Indians, and the descendants of seventeenth-century English pirates.

Jaguar: One Man's Struggle To Establish The World's First Jaguar Preserve, by Alan Rabinowitz

In 1983, zoologist Alan Rabinowitz ventured into the rainforest of Belize, determined to study the little-known jaguar in its natural habitat and to establish the world's first jaguar preserve.

SOUTH AMERICA:

One River, by Wade Davis

The story of two generations of scientific explorers in South America

Mother of God: An Extraordinary Journey into the Uncharted Tributaries of the Western Amazon, by Paul Rosolie

Explorer Paul Rosolie's adventure in the uncharted tributaries of the Western Amazon.

Walking the Amazon, by Ed Stafford

The story of Ed Stafford who set off to become the first man ever to walk the entire length of the Amazon.

INDIA:

Jungle Lore, by Jim Corbett

Corbett's autobiography of his life and career as a conservationist in India.

Ecology and Equity: The Use and Abuse of Nature in Contemporary India, by Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha

An exploration of the most ecologically complex country in the world. India's peoples range from technocrats to hunter-gathers and its environments from dense forest to wasteland.