

University of Toronto
Department of Geography
**GGR 387 – Special Topics in Environmental Geography:
The Social Geographies of Climate Change**

COURSE OUTLINE
Winter 2020

Class time and location: Thursday 11 am-1 pm, Wilson Hall (New College) Room 524
Instructor: Professor Sarah Wakefield
Office Hours: Thursdays 1:30-3, or by appointment; University College B202*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Analyses the social and behavioural geographies of climate change, including: climate change communication (how we interpret and communicate climate science); climate change prevention strategies, from the macro to micro scale; and possibilities for climate change adaptation. Instead of a pre-determined set of readings, this class relies heavily on independent research conducted by students outside the classroom. Classroom time will be primarily spent in team (small group) exercises.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the issues, concepts, and theories that help us understand the human activities and material features of spatial organization that relate to climate change.
- Critically appraise texts of various kinds, to assess the credibility of particular arguments and determine appropriate policy responses based on that evidence.
- Identify and assemble appropriate and reputable sources of evidence to support their own arguments or perspectives on the course material.
- Communicate their opinions and supporting evidence, using both traditional and contemporary methods (in particular, through writing and online video/multi-media).
- Work effectively in teams.

GROUP WORK AND GROUP-DIRECTED RESEARCH

This course uses a modified “self-directed learning” model to achieve the learning objectives. After some introductory grounding, students will work in teams (4-6 students) in class to

*To get to UC B202 from Sidney Smith Hall: cross St. George and go through the archway into the Sir Dan quad. Go straight ahead to the next archway – once under the arch, go through the left-hand doorway (if you reach the interior courtyard you have gone too far). Take the staircase up to the 2nd floor, and then turn right – my office is the first door on the left, just past the small classroom. Note that this location is NOT accessible: I am happy to make arrangements to meet elsewhere if need be!

identify: (1) what they already know about the topic for that module; (2) what questions they want to answer, and why; (3) what sources they will draw from, and why; (4) how the work outside of class will be divided; and (5) how the knowledge gained will be shared with the group, and ultimately with the rest of the class. Students will then work independently outside of class time to gather information to answer their questions (and to submit for credit in the form of “research reports”); class time will be used to share that information, and discuss it with their team and with the class as a whole. The instructor will provide support with developing questions and identifying sources, as well as in guiding the discussion and keeping the teams on track to answer their questions and meet the learning objectives.

READINGS

There will be a small number of shared readings for this course; these will be available online through the University of Toronto library system, on reserve at the Robarts Library, and/or circulated through Quercus. A schedule for these readings will be provided. Students are expected to attend all lectures having completed the assigned readings. Please note that most “reading” for this class will be independent (but team-directed) student research.

EVALUATION

1. Research reports	(six in total; due by 5 p.m. the night before before class)	30%
2. Educational video*	(due March 30 th ; viewings in class on April 2 nd)	30%
3. Final Exam	(in exam period)	25%
4. Participation	(in class)	15%

* *NB – this is a group project. Other forms of output will be considered on request.*

More information on each assignment (as well as the participation grade) is available on the course Quercus page.

COURSE POLICIES

Contacting the Instructor: Dr. Wakefield can be reached in person at her office during her office hours (or at other times by appointment). She will be happy to answer any questions you have during these times. Questions about lectures, assignments, or other aspects of the course can also be posted to the course discussion board (on the course website) at any time.

Electronic Device Use in the Classroom: The use of electronic devices in class is permitted in order to support student engagement and the exchange of ideas in the classroom. However, electronic devices are not to be used during class-time unless they are being used for class-related activities – students not complying with this expectation will be asked to leave.

Late penalties, Extensions and Accommodations: A late penalty of 5% of the total value of the assignment will be deducted from the grade per day for late work (including weekend days). Extensions will be granted in the case of illness or other emergencies, with appropriate documentation. However, because the group video assignment will be screened in class on the assigned date, late work cannot be accepted. If you anticipate that you may be unable to participate because of a health concern, please come and discuss with me as soon as possible. If you require accommodation for a disability or long-term illness, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility

Services as soon as possible at disability.services@utoronto.ca. If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please speak to me or seek the advice of your college registrar. More information is available at www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/students.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. At the University of Toronto, the following things are considered academic offences:

- Using someone else's ideas without appropriate acknowledgement, even by accident
- Copying material directly from a source and not placing the words within quotation marks
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor
- Making up sources or facts, or including references to sources that you did not use
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including having someone else complete part or all of an assignment for you, and/or having someone rewrite or add material to your work while editing (having someone read your work is a good idea, but they should tell you what is wrong, not fix it for you)

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, please talk to me. Note that the video assignment in this class will also require close attention to copyright protections, particularly for images (see the assignment handout for more details).

Handing in Assignments: All assignments are submitted electronically, and must be uploaded on the Quercus course website *before* the due date and time specified (if a time is not specified, the assignment is due before midnight (i.e., 11:59 p.m.). Please keep a back-up copy of all assignments even after they have been submitted, as well as rough notes and other prep work.