What the course is about
This seminar will explore how governments at the international, national, and regional levels are addressing – or not addressing – the extraordinary challenge of climate change. We will use a combination of readings, lectures, discussions, and writing projects to better understand the causes, consequences, and policies to address the most important political problem of our time.

Teaching objectives
This course is designed to both impart substantive knowledge about climate change and politics, and to help you become more skillful listeners, thinkers, writers, and speakers.

On completing the course, you should be significantly more knowledgeable about the causes, likely consequences, and policy implications of climate change, and hence able to speak and write intelligently about it. You should also grow more skilled in your ability to evaluate evidence, and to distinguish between scientifically-based reasoning and conjecture, popular beliefs, and magical thinking. Since almost everything we know about this issue is based on observational data, you should understand why our knowledge is limited, and how hard it is to distinguish correlation from causation.

This is a capstone course for most of you, meaning it is an opportunity to consolidate the learning skills you’ve accumulated over the past three and a half years. We will discuss these skills both and pool our knowledge about the most effective ways we can learn new material and acquire new skills.

Format
This class will combine lectures with discussions. Attendance is mandatory and everyone is expected to participate in the discussions, and to make one presentation to the class.

Readings
Everyone must complete all of the day’s readings before coming to class. All readings will be available on the course web site.
Presentation
Everyone will make a presentation to the class on a topic selected from the list below. Presentations will consist of a 15 minutes powerpoint presentation, and five or more minutes of answering questions. Please send a copy of the presentation and a 4 page outline/summary of your talk to me no later than 10:00 am on the day you present.

Grades
Grading will be based on your performance in four areas:

- Participation in class discussions: 20%
- Class presentation: 20%
- Midterm exam: 30%
- Take-home final exam: 30%

The midterm exam will be held in class on May 7, and combines multiple-choice questions with IDs and short answers. For the final exam, you will have 72 hours to answer a single question with a short essay.

Grades will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>&gt;98.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>91.5-98.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90.0-91.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88.5-90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>81.5-88.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80.0-81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78.5-80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>71.5-78.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70.0-71.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68.5-70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60.0-68.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No Laptops Policy
The class will be a laptop-free zone. Studies show that using laptops (or other devices, also banned) tends to reduce the pace of learning in college courses. By taking notes with paper and pen you will get more out of the course.

Absences
Class attendance is mandatory. So is participation in class discussions and exercises. Still, there will be times when students cannot attend – due to illness or unavoidable conflicts – and I will accommodate any reasonable absences. You will nonetheless be responsible for making up for missed classes, and learning all the material covered in your absence.

Intellectual property notice
All of the course materials that I have prepared, including my lectures, slides and exams, are my property alone and protected by state common law and federal copyright law. Video and audio recordings are prohibited without my consent. Students shall not sell or distribute notes, or receive remuneration for taking notes, without my express written consent.
April 2: Introduction to the course

April 4: The problem of climate change: sources and scope


Recommended:  

April 9: How does climate change affect economies?


April 11: Why climate change is a “super wicked” problem


April 16: The political roots of fossil fuels


April 18: The global politics of fossil fuels


Recommended:  
April 23: The political consequences of climate change: conflict


Recommended:

April 25: The political consequences of climate change: refugees


Recommended:

April 30: The ethics of action: how should burdens be shared?


Michael F. Maniates (2001), "Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?" *Global Environmental Politics* 1(3).

Recommended:
David Foster Wallace (2004), "Consider the Lobster," *Gourmet.*

May 2: The ethics of action: how much does the future matter?


May 7: Midterm
May 9: The anatomy of public opinion


Recommended:


May 14: What are the right policies?


Recommended:

May 16: Can we make carbon more expensive (part 1)?


Recommended:


May 21: Can we make carbon more expensive (part 2)?


Recommended:
May 23: Making a difference locally


May 28: The green new deal


Dave Roberts (2019), “This is an emergency, dammit,” *Vox* February 23.

May 30: The global politics of climate change


Recommended:

June 4: The future politics of geoengineering


June 6: Where do we go from here?

*Final exam handed out, due 5 pm June 9*