

Class meetings: M, W, F 10:50-11:40 UHN Multipurpose Room
Plenary: Wednesday March 16th, 5:05-6:20, Billings Lecture Hall
Office hours: Mondays, and Wednesdays 12:00-1:00 and 3:30-4:30 (in person or online with prior notice), or by appointment

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In 2017, the European Alps lost more than 5 feet of water-equivalent glacier mass. In 2018, more than 8,000 fires burned 1,893,913 acres in California. In 2019, the shaman and spokesman for the Yanomami people warned a crowd of US scholars gathered in Cambridge, MA, of the imminent danger his people and the rainforest faced. A month later Amazonia burned. A year later, during **the warmest year on record** ever recorded, Australia burned.

In this course we will examine the advancement of some phenomena resulting from the one degree Celsius that has already warmed the planet, and their impacts on environmental, social, economic, and human systems. We will locate examples and case studies in Latin America: from tipping point triggers in the Amazon rainforest, to social disruptions due to changing water patterns, climate migrations and the politics surrounding climate action. Why Latin America? Because of what its paradoxical experience can teach us: a region rich in diverse forms of practical and adaptive knowledge of many cultures, that cannot escape high indexes of poverty and inequality, or its colonial legacy.

The course is concerned with the role that human beliefs, values, and fears play in shaping human institutions and practical wisdom, and how diverse human groups understand and face our climate crisis. Working from an interdisciplinary theoretical grounding on sustainability and cultural studies, we will explore the main issues affecting the region, some of its root causes, and anticipated eco-social disruptions. We will also address matters of representation -textual, visual, experiential- and draw information from multiple sources – journalistic, research-based journals, artistic and real-time communications.

2. COURSE ORGANIZATION

The semester is conceptually divided into three parts: introductory-exploratory, analytical, and collectively productive.

During the first part of the course, we will capture the complex nature of anthropogenic problems that have led to global environmental change, of which the climate is primary evidence. We will also explore the representation of connected ideas through journalistic anglophone sources and Spanish media in translation. The thematic focus will be on human impacts -extraction, consumption, unequal distribution of resources, disruption of rural and indigenous communities- and human mobility due to climate “crisis” -migrations and climate refugees, as well as on human communications and human relations -geopolitics, representation, political discourse. Primary readings will be contextualized with secondary

readings from different disciplines (as thematically appropriate). The nature of classroom interactions will vary and shift between instructor-led discussions following a form of Socratic method, to student-centered activities on-line and student-led face-to-face activities.

The second or analytical portion of the course will include the examination of specific topics through case studies, literary texts and scholarly essays, and findings will be contextualized with secondary readings from different disciplines (as thematically appropriate). We will pay particular attention to the Amazon region and the complex climate phenomena unravelling as a result of deforestation, illegal mining and damming waterways. During this period students will have a virtual conference and conversations with Mexican scholar Lidia Blásquez Martínez (details coming soon), as an opportunity to learn directly from intellectuals working in the field about collaborative work and emerging models.

The third and final part of the semester will be devoted to representation, including artistic expression and cultural context. Pedagogically, this is the time when students will carry out their research work collaboratively and prepare for their poster and presentation sessions. In the classroom, the student-centered aspect will be supported by a 3-week, daily 15-minute exercise: the 21-day Racial Equity Habit Building in Food Systems, organized by **FSNE (Food Solutions New England)**. The goal of this exercise and geographic shift, is to engage in a dialogue between modernity and traditional cultures, between modern societies and coloniality, and bring topics of ethnic diversity and social prejudice discussed earlier in the class to bear on the students' New England space. Thematically the exercise is connected to food systems (SU) and human/cultural empathy (D2).

3. COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES:

Objectives

Prime course objectives are to develop critical and reflexive capacities and the skills for analyzing a variety of texts, cultural objects and representations regarding Climate Change and Latin America, in a global context. Analytically, will emphasize the importance of tracking interrelations at local, regional and international levels, as complex systems.

Analyze and describe how the aesthetics of representation convey unique opportunities for environmental, social, political and historical interpretations.

Demonstrate a working knowledge of the science and discourses of climate change, including perspectives that are engaged by scientists, scholars, artists and the public, outside US borders. This includes understanding the possibility to integrate science with complementary knowledges to view the world as complex *whole*

Gain global consciousness and ethical awareness surrounding questions of social responsibility and an understanding of the existence and impact of asymmetrical power relationships (global, national, local, and personal) from both a Western and a non-Western perspective.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, the student will be expected to:

- (1) identify many of the values, behavioral norms, and traditions of the Hispanic and indigenous people that emerge in the context of climate change.
- (2) demonstrate an understanding of the science and discourses of climate change, including perspectives that are engaged by scientists, scholars, artists and the public, outside US borders.

- (3) demonstrate understanding of multiple epistemologies, cultural contexts, and cosmologies by analyzing different discourses about sustainability and the role of humans on the planet.
- (4) demonstrate critical knowledge of struggles and negotiations of indigenous and non-indigenous populations with modernity for sustaining their lives and identity.
- (5) analyze, discuss and write critically about cultural differences and the interdependence between a global economy and the sustainability of both biodiversity and culture in the context of a changing world.

4. ASSIGNMENTS AND METHODS OF EVALUATION:

- a. **Short Essays: 1 blog and 2 short papers:** Each student will be responsible for writing one 2-version blog entry and a short two-page essay. A second short two-page paper will *respond* to one of the primary sources identified for the poster project, and you will later integrate it into the final research paper.

1. Blog Entry: the blog is meant as a review and synthesis journalistic information, preferably from non-US media, which highlights a particular issue connected to the week's class topic, that students will share with their peers to stimulate a discussion. The rest of the class will be required to respond to the blog. Prior to posting the blog, the professor will review the essay and make editorial comments (much like with a regular publisher).

2. Review: a review is an 1-2 page "essay" meant to describe (informational) and convey (interpretative) to the reader the primary ideas and arguments of an artistic or literary piece. The goal of a review is to remain as objective as possible to the author's ideas or intentions.

3. Response: a response is a 2-page "essay" that enable interpretative or argumentative writing. This essay is a critical synthesis and represents an opportunity to write from a more subjective perspective. This paper will become part of the final research paper.

- b. **Lead discussion:** Leading discussion is a communicative group exercise connected to the FSNE Racial Equity Habit Building in Food Systems during the latter part of the semester.
- c. **Final poster project:** this is a collaborative research-based project, that has three components. First the collaborative production of a poster. Second a presentation of that poster and third an individual research paper of the topic you researched for the poster. Details about the poster project will be announced at the March 16th Plenary. The posters are due on April 17th and the student PowerPoint presentations will take place April 13th and April 20th, from 5:05-6:20 pm. The First-Year Research Symposium will take place at the Alumni House on April 27th. The paper is due on the date of the final exam, May 9th.
- d. **Film viewing and conference:** Any audiovisual material will be available online and be scheduled for viewing outside of class time to later be discussed in class. The virtual conference will be scheduled during class-time.
- e. **Participation:** Active participation in this class includes volunteering answers, staying on task in group work, and respecting the classroom environment rules. In order to participate actively and purposefully each day in class, students need to be prepared. Class participation will be evaluated based on preparedness, attendance, and the student's meaningful contribution to the class.

5. EVALUATION COMPONENT

a. Short Essay (Review) & 2-version Blog	20
b. Class participation/online responses/lead discussion	25
c. Exam (a short mid-term)	15
d. Research-Poster project	
Scaffolding (proposal, annotated bibliog, PPT pres., etc)	10
group poster project grade	10
individual contribution to the project assessed in research paper and response)	20

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89.9
A 93-96	B 83-86.9
A- 90-92	B- 80-82.9
C+ 77-79.9	D+ 67-69.9
C 73-76.9	D 63-66.9
C- 70-72.9	F 0-62.9

7. COURSE CONTENT:

Primary and secondary readings will include journalistic material from daily newspapers (in translation) selected by the professor; artistic works including installation and public art actions by Helen Escobedo, Nicolás García Urriburu and Nele Acevedo and others; selections of fictional authors Leslie Marmon Silko (prose), Gloria Gozalez (prose), Juan Carlos Galeano (poetry), and cultural expressions from indigenous communities; academic published works from researchers and critics such as: Walter Mignolo (Semiotics and Coloniality), Paul Robbins (Political Ecology), Tim Morton (Philosophy), Enrique Leff (environmental epistemology and ethics), Arturo Escobar (anthropology), Marina Hirota (Physicist, Amazonia tipping points), Michael Smith (Historian/resilience Central America), Diana Liverman (climatologist/ adaptation), Wolfgang Sachs (globalization/ development), Paul Hawken (Drawdown Project), Bill McKibben (writer climate activist), Vandana Shiva (activist), Marcela Tovar Restrepo (Gender and Climate Change) and Jem Bendell (Climate Science /Deep Adaptation).

Texts

We will read works and selected fragments from publications listed below. All texts will be provided digitally by the professor.

Acosta, A. et all. *Pluriverse. A Post-Development Dictionary*. Tulika Books, 2019.

Bendell, Jem. "Deep Adaptation: A Map for Navigating Climate Tragedy." *IFLAS*, 2018

Büscher Bram & Robert Fletcher. *The Conservation Revolution, Radical Ideas for Saving Nature Beyond the Anthropocene*. London: Verso. 2020.

Dankelman, Irene. *Gender and Climate Change: An Introduction*. London: Eartscan, 2010.

- Escobar, Arturo. "Thinking-feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies of the South." AIBR, 2015.
- Hawken, Paul. *Drawdown. The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming*. New York: Penguin Books, 2017. Print.
- Leff, Enrique. "Latin American environmental thinking: a heritage of knowledge for sustainability." *Environmental Ethics* 34:4 (2012).
- Mignolo, Walter, D. "Preface." *The Idea of Latin America*. Mden: Blackwell, 2005. Print.
- Morton, Timothy. *The Ecological Thought*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2010. Print.
- Robbins, Paul. *Political Ecology*. Singapore: Blackwell Publishing, 2004. Print
- Smith, Michael. "When History is Now" *A Contracorriente*, 2020.
- Sachs, Wolfgang (ed.). *The Development Dictionary, a guide to knowledge as power*. 2nd edition. London: Zed Books, 2010. Print

8. OTHER

Absences. More than two (2) unexcused absences will lower your participation grade. Unexcused absences may include light illness, faulty alarm clocks, activities organized by other courses, etc. Official excuses may consist of a. religious holidays; b. UVM-sponsored events (during the first 2 weeks of classes, you should submit a letter to your instructor, on UVM letterhead and signed by your supervisor or coach, with the dates and reasons for your absences); c. Dean's excuse (contact your Dean's Office if you have a serious reason to miss classes, such as a positive Covid-19 test, and they will email me)

Academic integrity

It is plagiarism to present another's ideas or words as your own. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and can result in a failing grade or worse. For a full explanation of UVM's policy on academic integrity, please see:

<https://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/acadintegrity.pdf>

Student learning accommodations

In keeping with University policy, any student with a documented disability interested in utilizing accommodations should contact ACCESS, the office of Disability Services on campus:

www.uvm.edu/access. *If you have a note from ACCESS, or if you have any other issues which may affect your performance or needs in this class, please speak to me about your needs within the first two weeks. This will greatly help me enhance your SPAN 001 experience and allow you to maximize your learning in the class.*

Religious holidays

Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. If you need to miss class to observe a religious holiday, please *submit the dates of your absence in writing by the end of the second full week of classes*. You will be permitted to make up work within a mutually agreed-upon time.

Key administrative information

Add/drop, pass/no pass, audit deadline: Monday January 31

Last day to withdraw: Thursday April 4, 2022

Important dates:

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- Poster Plenary on Wednesday, March 16th, 5:05-6:20, Billings Lecture Hall
 - Final Poster due on Sunday April 17th at midnight.
 - Partner sections of Student PowerPoint presentations April 13th and April 20th, 5:05-6:20 pm, location TBA
 - First- Year Research Symposium, April 27th, Alumni House
 - Final Research paper on date of final exam for the course, May 9th.
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General Course calendar of assignments

- .. activities in class and final/poster project
- .. BLOGS & Assignments due
- .. General information

See calendar of readings and activities on [Calendar link](#)

CALENDAR OF ASSIGNMENTS

DATE		
W 1		
01/19		
01/21		
W 2		
01/24		Last day to add without instructor permission Response online
01/26		Response online
01/28		Response online
W 3		
01/31		Add/drop, Pass/no pass, Audit deadline
02/02		
02/04		BLOG 1
W 4		
02/07		
02/09		
02/11		BLOG 2
W5		
02/14		BLOG 3
02/16		

02/18		BLOG 4
W6		
02/21		Holiday
02/23		Response online
02/25		BLOG 5
W 7		
02/28		REVIEW ESSAY
03/02		
03/04		BLOG 6
	SPRING RECESS	
W8		
03/14		SHORT EXAM
03/16		POSTER PLENARY
03/18		BLOG 7
W 9		
03/21		BLOG 8 GROUPS
03/23		VIRTUAL CONFERENCE
03/25		PRE-PROPOSAL STAGE 1. DUE
W 10		
03/28		Final day for blog essay
03/30		
04/01		PROPOSAL STAGE 2. DUE
W 11		
04/04		Last day to withdraw FSNE 1
04/06		FSNE 2
04/08		UPDATE STAGE 3. DUE FSNE 3
W 12		
04/11		FSNE 4
04/13		FSNE 5 POSTER PRES. STAGE 4 (5:05-6:20) Location TBA

04/15		FSNE 6 POSTER DUE 04/17 STAGE 4 (midnight)
W 13		
04/18		FSNE 7
04/20		FSNE 8 POSTER PRES. STAGE 4 (5:05-6:20) Location TBA
04/22		
W 14		
04/25		RESPONSE TO SOURCE STAGE 4
04/27		First-Year Research Symposium Alumni House
04/29		
W 15		
05/02		Response online
05/04		Response online
05/06		LAST DAY
05/09	CAPSTONE PAPER DUE ON FINAL EXAM DATE STAGE 5	

COURSE CALENDAR

1		01/19 Introduction to course What is Climate Change? The science of Climate Change, Climate Crisis Terminology: Climate Change	01/21 (Journalism) NASA” Global Climate Change website: <i>A Degree of Concern: Why Global Temperatures Matter?</i> Group Activity: News Round Table Sign up for BLOG writing
2	01/24 Last day to add w/out inst. permission (Journalism-History) A history of climate action: N. Rich, “ Losing the Earth : the decade we almost stopped the climate” (<i>NY Times</i> , Part I) Terminology: Int. organizations <i>Forum: 1. NASA: 2021 Tied for 6th Warmest Year in Continued Trend</i>	01/26 (Journalism-History) A history of climate action: N. Rich, “ Losing the Earth : the decade we almost stopped the climate” (<i>NY Times</i> , Part II) Terminology: International organizations <i>Forum: 2. International climate conference Netherlands 1989 – response online</i>	01/28 (Representation) What is the <i>Global South</i> ? Terminology: Representation <i>Forum: 3. The Most Important COP Briefing the World Never Heard– response online</i>

3	01/31 Add/drop, Pass/no pass, Audit deadline (Philosophy) What is Critical Thinking? Timothy Morton, <i>The Ecological Thought</i> (Introduction p 1-13) Terminology: The Scientific method	02/02 (Sociology-Theology) <u>Roots of the problem: Development</u> Sachs, <i>The Development Dictionary</i> Terminology: Development	02/04 <i>Pluriverse</i> Svampa “A Latin American Critique of Development” Shiva: “Development for the 1 per cent” BLOG 1 (Development)
4	02/07 (Semiotics) What do we understand by Latin America? Mignolo: <i>The Idea of Latin America</i> Terminology: Coloniality	02/09 (Anthropology) <u>Roots of the problem: Ways of knowing</u> Escobar, “ Thinking-feeling with the Earth ”	02/11 <i>Pluriverse</i> Botero Gómez, “Sentipensar” Terminology: ontology BLOG 2 (Knowledge)
5	02/14 (Theology) <u>Roots of the problem: Equality</u> Pope Francis, <i>The Encyclical</i> BLOG 3 (Equality)	02/16 (Sociology-Theology) Hickel, “ Apartheid in the World Bank and the IMF ” Sachs, Contextual comments <i>The Encyclical</i> Terminology: Globalization	02/18 <u>Roots of the problem: inequity in diversity</u> Case study: Brazil BLOG 4 (Inequity in Diversity)
6	02/21 President’s Day Holiday	02/23 <u>Roots of the problem: Gender inequity</u> Dankelman, <i>Gender and CC: “Introduction”</i> and case studies Liverman, <i>Gender and Climate Change: IPCC</i> <i>Shiva, “Challenges in the face of Climate Change”</i> – response online Terminology: Patriarchy	02/25 Smith, <i>Climate, Gender and “A Sustainable Future for Latina America.”</i> A case study from Nicaragua. Terminology: Sustainability BLOG 5 (Gender and Climate)
7	02/28 Amazonia: An Introduction to complex systems. REVIEW ESSAY DUE	03/02 Amazonia: Tipping points and feedback loops	03/04 <i>Amazonia and Planetary Futures</i> BLOG 6 (Amazonia)
	03/07 Spring recess	03/09 Spring recess	03/11 Spring recess
8	03/14 SHORT EXAM	03/16 The Role of the Arts and Humanities Part I POSTER PLENARY: 5:05-6:20, Billings Lecture Hall	03/18 The Role of the Arts and Humanities Part II BLOG 7 (Role of Arts & Humanities)
9	03/21 A case for Adaptation Climate Crisis and <i>Deep Adaptation</i> BLOG 8: (Are we Doing Enough?) GROUPS	03/23 <i>Focus on research</i> In-class online Conference	03/25 A case for Adaptation Climate Change and Drawdown Project PRE-PROPOSAL STAGE 1. DUE@ midnight

10	03/28 <i>Pluriverse</i> FINAL DATE for BLOG essays	03/30 <i>Pluriverse</i> Indigenous Cauca Congress	04/01 <i>Focus on Research</i> Robbins: "Research is Theft" PROPOSAL STAGE 2. DUE @ midnight
11	04/04 Last day to withdraw Dialogue of knowledge" and the economic concept of De-growth - Enrique Leff FSNE 1	04/06 What about Sustainability? Sustainability & the SDGs FSNE 2	04/08 UPDATE STAGE 3. DUE @ midnight FSNE 3
12	04/11 International Agreements Manifesto FSNE 4	04/13 <i>Focus on Research: Poster Practice</i> POSTER PRES. STAGE 4 (5:05-6:20) Location TBA FSNE 5	04/15 <i>Focus on Research: Poster Work</i> POSTER DUE 04/17 @ midnight STAGE 4 FSNE 6
13	04/18 Sustainability and Governance Management vs Governance The Southern Cone (Rapa Nui) FSNE 7	04/20 <i>Focus on Research: Poster Practice</i> POSTER PRES. STAGE 4 (5:05-6:20) Location TBA FSNE 8	04/22 Sustainability and Food system Closing thoughts FSNE
14	04/25 Health Crisis, Climate Crisis RESPONSE TO SOURCE STAGE 4 due @ midnight	04/27 First-Year Research Symposium Alumni House	04/29 Robbins: "The construction of Nature"
15	05/02 Film: <i>My Octopus Teacher</i>	05/04 Film: <i>Soundscapes</i>	05/06 LAST DAY Peer review exercise CAPSTONE PAPER DUE ON FINAL EXAM DATE STAGE 5