

## Course Outline

### Part I

<b>Programme Title</b>	: Bachelor of Social Sciences (Honours) in Global and Environmental Studies
<b>Programme QF Level</b>	: 5
<b>Course Title</b>	: Climate Change and Society
<b>Course Code</b>	: SSC3186
<b>Department</b>	: Social Sciences and Policy Studies
<b>Credit Points</b>	: 3
<b>Contact Hours</b>	: 39
<b>Pre-requisite(s)</b>	: Nil
<b>Medium of Instruction</b>	: EMI
<b>Course Level</b>	: 3

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### Part II

The University's Graduate Attributes and seven Generic Intended Learning Outcomes (GILOs) represent the attributes of ideal EdUHK graduates and their expected qualities respectively. Learning outcomes work coherently at the University (GILOs), programme (Programme Intended Learning Outcomes) and course (Course Intended Learning Outcomes) levels to achieve the goal of nurturing students with important graduate attributes.

In gist, the Graduate Attributes for Sub-degree, Undergraduate, Taught Postgraduate, Professional Doctorate and Research Postgraduate students consist of the following three domains (i.e. in short "PEER & I"):

- Professional Excellence;
- Ethical Responsibility; &
- Innovation.

The descriptors under these three domains are different for the three groups of students in order to reflect the respective level of Graduate Attributes.

The seven GILOs are:

1. Problem Solving Skills
2. Critical Thinking Skills
3. Creative Thinking Skills

- 4a. Oral Communication Skills
- 4b. Written Communication Skills
- 5. Social Interaction Skills
- 6. Ethical Decision Making
- 7. Global Perspectives

## 1. Course Synopsis

This course is designed to build students' understanding of the interrelationships between climate change and society. Climate change is not simply a scientific process that is distant from our lives. Instead, climate change is produced by human actions, is understood in culturally specific ways, and generates impacts on individuals and societies. Understanding the relationships between individuals, societies and climate change requires an understanding of the drivers of our behaviours, including psychological and cultural factors, as well as questions of how much our social surroundings shape actions that have environmental consequences. Different societies will contribute to climate change in different ways and they will have different responses to it.

Course lectures will introduce key themes and concepts (possibly including guest speakers). However, the primary pedagogy will be premised on problem-based learning. Students will be required to undertake outside reading and research, and to involve themselves in experiences outside the classroom. These readings and experiences will serve as the basis for rich classroom discussions, debates and group work. Students will be asked to consider questions regarding their own values and behaviours, accepted cultural and social attitudes, impacts of media messages and marketing, related political processes and their own—and society's—contributions and likely responses to climate change. In the process, students will better understand their own climate-related impacts as well as those of other actors in society.

## 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

*Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:*

- CILO<sub>1</sub> Understand fundamental interrelationships of climate change with individuals and societies.
- CILO<sub>2</sub> Critically analyze frames and interpretations of climate change by different actors and interest groups in society.
- CILO<sub>3</sub> Understand and justify their own value judgments about climate change, and to evaluate and critique information and policies concerning climate change.
- CILO<sub>4</sub> Develop a sense of their place in the environment-society relationship, allowing students to rethink (and change) behaviours that impact on climate change.

## 3. Content, CILOs and Teaching & Learning Activities

Course Content	CILOs	Suggested Teaching & Learning Activities
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Introduction to climate sciences	<i>CILO<sub>1</sub></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures)</li> <li>• provocative questions followed by classroom discussions</li> <li>• group sharing of ideas from course journals and assigned readings</li> <li>• writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal</li> </ul>
Interrelationship between climate change and society	<i>CILO<sub>1,2</sub></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures)</li> <li>• provocative questions followed by classroom discussions</li> <li>• group sharing of ideas from course journals and assigned readings</li> <li>• writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal</li> </ul>
Social construction of climate change: politicization of science, lay perception, media and climate change, and the 'risk society'	<i>CILO<sub>2,3,4</sub></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures)</li> <li>• provocative questions followed by classroom discussions</li> <li>• group sharing of ideas from course journals and assigned readings</li> <li>• writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal</li> </ul>
Climate change denial and debate: uncertainty and doubt; inaction; social and behavioural psychology	<i>CILO<sub>3,4</sub></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures)</li> <li>• provocative questions followed by classroom discussions</li> <li>• group sharing of ideas from course journals and assigned readings</li> <li>• writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal</li> </ul>
Mitigation and behavior change: Society and technology, policy and education	<i>CILO<sub>3,4</sub></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures)</li> <li>• provocative questions followed by classroom discussions</li> <li>• group sharing of ideas from</li> </ul>

		course journals and assigned readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal</li> </ul>
Adaption: vulnerability and actions in developed and developing world contexts; inequality and poverty	<i>CILO<sub>3,4</sub></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures)</li> <li>• provocative questions followed by classroom discussions</li> <li>• group sharing of ideas from course journals and assigned readings</li> <li>• writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal</li> </ul>
Social activism: Drivers of individual and societal responses to climate change	<i>CILO<sub>3,4</sub></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures)</li> <li>• provocative questions followed by classroom discussions</li> <li>• group sharing of ideas from course journals and assigned readings</li> <li>• writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal</li> </ul>

#### 4. Assessment

Assessment Tasks	Weighting (%)	CILOs
(a) Active participation	40%	<i>CILO<sub>1,2,3,4</sub></i>
(b) Mid-term assessment	20%	<i>CILO<sub>1,2,3,4</sub></i>
(c) End-of-course assessment and essay	40%	<i>CILO<sub>1,2,3,4</sub></i>

#### 5. Required Text(s) (indicative)

Robin LEICHENKO and Karen O'BRIEN, *Climate and Society: Transforming the Future*, second edition. Cambridge: Polity, 2024.

#### 6. Recommended Readings (indicative)

Dryzek, J., Norgaard, R., & Schlosberg, D. (2011). *Oxford Handbook of Climate Change and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hamilton, C. (2010). *Requiem for a Species: Why We Resist the Truth about Climate Change*. London: Earthscan.

- Hamilton, C., & Denniss, R. (2005). *Affluenza: When Too Much is Never Enough*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Hulme, M. (2009). *Why We Disagree About Climate Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lever-Tracy, C. (Ed.). (2010). *Routledge Handbook of Climate Change and Society*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Lutgens, F. K. and E. J. Tarbuck (2013). *The atmosphere: an introduction to meteorology*. Boston, Pearson.
- Malone, E. L. (2009). *Debating Climate Change: Pathways through Argument to Agreement*. London: Earthscan.
- Mearns, R., & Norton, A. (2010). *Social Dimensions of Climate Change: Equity and Vulnerability in a Warming World*. Washing, D.C.: World Bank.
- Moser, S. C., & Dilling, L. (Eds.). (2007). *Creating a Climate for Change: Communicating Climate Change and Facilitating Social Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Roberts, J. T. (2009). Climate Change: Why the Old Approaches Aren't Working. In K. A. Gould, & T. L. Lewis (Eds.), *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Urry, J. (2011). *Climate Change and Society*. Cambridge: Polity.

## 7. Related Web Resources

- 350.org: international campaign to promote just and science-based solutions to climate crisis  
[www.350.org](http://www.350.org)
- GreenFILE information on human impacts on the environment  
<http://library.ied.edu.hk/record=b1762886~S5>
- The International Research Center for Climate and Society  
<http://portal.iri.columbia.edu/portal/server.pt>
- TckTckTck. The World is Ready: Coalition calling for a fair, ambitious and binding climate change agreement.  
<http://tcktcktck.org/>
- United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs – Climate Change and Sustainable Development  
<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/climate-change/index.shtml>

## 8. Related Journals

- Climate Policy*
- Development and Change*
- Environment and Behaviour*
- Environment and Planning D: Society & Space*
- Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture*
- GAIA: Ecological Perspectives for Science and Society*
- Global Environmental Change*

## **9. Academic Honesty**

The University upholds the principles of honesty in all areas of academic work. We expect our students to carry out all academic activities honestly and in good faith. Please refer to the *Policy on Academic Honesty, Responsibility and Integrity* (<https://www.eduhk.hk/re/uploads/docs/000000000016336798924548BbN5>). Students should familiarize themselves with the Policy.

## **10. Others**

Newspaper articles and other media reports, including contemporaneous reporting, related to the course; recent related reports from scientific organizations and nongovernmental organizations; new video media and websites.

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