

**Urban and Environmental Policy 230**  
**Climate Justice: Theory and Practice, Wednesdays 1:30pm-4:25pm PT**  
**Professor Mijin Cha**

**Course Logistics**

*Professor's email:* mcha@oxy.edu. During the semester, you can expect a response within 48 hours. If it is a question that can be answered by reviewing the syllabus or course Moodle page, I would encourage you to do that before emailing me.

*Office Hours:* Tuesdays, 1:30-3pm; Wednesdays, 11:30am-1pm PT. Rather than hang out on Zoom, please sign up for office hours through this link: <https://calendly.com/mcha-1/15min>

All readings will be posted on Moodle. Please check Moodle before every class, as readings may change over the course of the semester

UEP 230 is a 4-unit course. It is expected that students in this class will be devoting at least twelve (12) hours a week (including in-class time) on average.

**Class Format and Zoom Link**

For this Spring, we will meet synchronously. Because 3-hours is a long time on zoom, we will take regular breaks and there will be different class formats throughout the semester. Some classes, we will meet for the 3-hour block, other classes will have pre-recorded lecture and then discussion and less time synchronously, and there will be classes that require more work outside of class but less time synchronously.

Zoom link: <https://occidental.zoom.us/j/82851684588>, Meeting ID: 828 5168 4588, Passcode: 073767

**What are the goals of this course?**

This course focuses on “climate justice,” so we will discuss less the scientific aspects of drivers of climate change and focus more on how climate change interacts with society. The goals of this course are to understand what causes climate change, what are the impacts of climate change, and explore the socio-economic aspects of climate change. Students will critically analyze the relationship between race, class, and climate change. We will also touch on policy proposals to address climate change, ranging from Cap and Trade to the Green New Deal. After taking this course, students should be able to understand the socio-economic challenges to climate change and have an understanding of different policy approaches to addressing the climate crisis.

**Course Requirements**

Participation (30%): You are expected to do all of the course readings and keep up to date. This is a reading intensive seminar. Attendance and preparation is required. Participation in class

(coming to class and being a part of it, or communicating with me in a timely manner if you can't come to class) counts for 20% of your grade. Your participation in class will also be evaluated based on your ability to contribute to the class discussions as a whole. I am very mindful that discussion online is difficult but if we are all present and considerate of others, we can develop a classroom community that will help foster learning from me and also learning from your peers.

Be mindful of your own contribution but also the overall classroom dynamic. Listen attentively to others, recognize when to “step up” and “step back” to contribute to a productive discussion that enables meaningful participation by others in the class.

Participation also includes preparing reaction papers for each class. We will spend the beginning of class discussing the reaction papers and they will provide the foundation for your midterm and final exam.

Midterm Exam (25%): You will have an 24-hour take-home mid-term on **Wed. March 3rd**. The midterm will be discussed in more detail in class.

Group Presentation (25%): You will work with classmates to research and present an in-depth case study of climate justice in the U.S. or globally. More details will be discussed in class.

Final Paper (20%): Final papers are due **Friday, April 30th by 5pm**.

| <b>Graded Assignment</b> | <b>Date Due</b>   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Midterm                  | <b>Handed out Wed. March 3<sup>rd</sup>, due Thur. March 4<sup>th</sup> by 5pm.</b> |
| Group presentations      | <b>Wed. April 14<sup>th</sup> and Wed. April 21st</b>                               |
| Final Paper              | <b>Friday, April 30th</b>   |

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Academic Ethics and Plagiarism Policy**

Students are expected to comply with the Student Handbook, in particular the section on [Academic Ethics](https://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics/academic-ethics). (<https://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics/academic-ethics>)

Whenever outside sources are used, they must be properly credited. Plagiarism consists of any form of passing off, or attempting to pass off, the knowledge or work of others as your own. It is a form of cheating. Examples of plagiarism include: unattributed quotations from a book, magazine or article; copying from the notes or essays of others; the submission of work actually written or dictated by others; and unattributed use of other people's ideas. Remember, plagiarism includes information from books, newspapers, journals and the Internet.

I randomly check sentences in students' papers to see if there is plagiarism. If you are caught plagiarizing, you will automatically fail this course. Plagiarism is also grounds possible expulsion from the college. Students should consult Occidental's student handbook for information on academic misconduct policy at the college: <http://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics/academic-misconduct>.

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### **Classroom Community**

This course is intended to provoke discussion and new understandings of climate change. Toward this end, the course will grapple with discussions about inequity, power, race, class, and gender. We expect our classroom to be a productive space for open, honest, and thoughtful discussion that recognizes and respects differences and acknowledges the broad range of knowledge we bring to the classroom and discussion. Please remember that our focus in this course is the issues, texts, course materials and presentations themselves, and not the personalities, identities, or opinions of other participants in the discussion.

### **Support Services**

Writing Center: The college provides a set of resources to students to support them in learning. The [Writing Center](#) provides writing assistance to students to develop ideas, draft, and revise papers. I would strongly encourage you to visit the Writing Center if you feel you need more intensive feedback on your writing.

Disability Services: Students with documented disabilities who are registered with Disability Services are required to present their accommodation letter to the instructor at the beginning of each semester or as soon as possible thereafter. Any student who experiences significant physical or mental impairments may contact Disability Services at (323) 259-2969 to learn about available services and support. More information is available at <http://www.oxy.edu/disability-services>

Emmons: The Emmons Wellness Center also provides important support services and can help you address issues of stress, medical and mental health, and overall well-being. For more information, see their website at <http://www.oxy.edu/emmons-wellness-center>

Accommodations for Reasons of Faith and Conscience: Consistent with Occidental College's commitment to creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that students should be excused from class for reasons of faith and conscience without academic consequence. While it is not feasible to schedule coursework around all days of conviction for a class as a whole, faculty will honor requests from individual students to reschedule coursework, to be absent from classes that conflict with the

identified days. Information about this process is available on the ORSL website:  
<https://www.oxy.edu/office-religious-spiritual-life>

**Title IX:** In the event that you choose to write or speak about having experienced sexual or interpersonal violence, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual exploitation or any other form of sexual harassment, as a designated Responsible Employee, I must notify the Title IX Office. They will contact you to let you know about accommodations and support services at Oxy and reporting options both on and off-campus.

If you do not want the Title IX Office notified, instead of disclosing this information to your instructor, either through conversation or a class assignment, you can speak confidentially with the following people on campus:

- Marianne Frapwell, Survivor Advocate, Project SAFE (survivoradvocate@oxy.edu)
- Emmons Counseling (For appointments, call: 323-259-2657)
- Rev. Dr. Susan Young, Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (young@oxy.edu)

The sexual misconduct policy, along with additional resources, can be found at:  
<http://www.oxy.edu/sexual-respect-title-ix/policies-procedures>. If you would like to contact the Title IX Office directly, you can email Title IX Coordinator Alexandra Fulcher at [afulcher@oxy.edu](mailto:afulcher@oxy.edu) or call 323-259-1338.

### **COVID-19 Statement**

You are trying to learn- and I am trying to teach- during a global pandemic. In the best-case scenario, it means the semester will be more stressful than usual. In the worst case, many, many terrible things can happen. But, we still have to try to be present and engage, as best we can. I expect you to turn assignments in on time and come to class prepared. But, again, global pandemic. You are in less than ideal situations, and I am also in a less than ideal situation. So, let's agree we will all try our best and we will communicate our needs and constraints. I will promise to be flexible and empathetic and you will also promise to be flexible and empathetic. Together, we will get through this. The most important thing is communication. Please let me know if there are issues. It is much better to tell me beforehand if you are struggling to finish an assignment than ask for an extension after the deadline. In general, I do not grant extensions but if you talk to me beforehand, we can figure out a timeline that works for both of us.

#### **Week 1: Wed. Jan. 20th**

Class overview  
What is Climate Change?

Reading: *Historical Overview of Climate Change Science*:  
<http://biblioteca.climantica.org/resources/37/05-ar4wg1-ch01-historicaloverview.pdf>

#### **Week 2: Wed. Jan. 27th**

Where do emissions come from? The relationship between capitalism and climate change

Readings:

*Climate Change and Capitalism*: <https://journals.cdrs.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2016/09/408-1121-2-PB.pdf>

EPA: *U.S. Greenhouse Gases and Sinks*:

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-04/documents/us-ghg-inventory-2016-chapter-executive-summary.pdf>

The Science of Climate Change: What is happening to oceans, glaciers, and land?

Readings:

*IPCC: Oceans*:

[http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/WGIIAR5-Chap6\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/WGIIAR5-Chap6_FINAL.pdf)

*IPCC: Food Security and Food Production* (Sections 7.1-7.4):

[http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/WGIIAR5-Chap7\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/WGIIAR5-Chap7_FINAL.pdf)

(Group discussions and presentation in-class- present impacts)

### Week 3: Feb. 3

The politics of climate change: What causes climate denial?

Readings:

Mike Hulme, *Why We Disagree about Climate Change: Understanding Controversy, Inaction, and Opportunity*, Ch. 3 and *The Performance of Science*, Ch. 5- *The Things We Believe*

*Assessing ExxonMobil's climate change communications (1977–2014)*:

<http://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/aa815f/pdf>

Sam Knights, *The Climate Movement Must Be Ready To Challenge Rising Right-Wing Environmentalism*,

<https://jacobinmag.com/2020/11/climate-change-right-wing-environmentalism-alt-right-eco-fascism>

### Week 4: Feb. 10

Guest speaker: Marcela Mulholland, Deputy Director for Climate, Data for Progress

Climate change and people

Readings:

*Climate Change and Social Inequity:*

[https://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2017/wp152\\_2017.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2017/wp152_2017.pdf)

*Rethinking climate refugees and climate conflict: Rhetoric, reality and the politics of policy discourse:*

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.475.366&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

*Climate, Covid, and Race series:*

- The Bronx: <https://www.dataforprogress.org/blog/5/18/bronx-is-epicenter-for-coronavirus>
- Albany, Georgia: <https://www.dataforprogress.org/blog/5/6/coronavirus-and-racism-combine-in-georgia>
- Detroit: <https://www.dataforprogress.org/blog/4/23/coronavirus-climate-communities-of-color>

Week 5: Wednesday, Feb 17

Equity, cont'd and the cost of carbon

Reading:

Global Issues: *Climate Justice and Equity:*

<http://www.globalissues.org/article/231/climate-justice-and-equity>

*Pricing the Priceless: Cost-Benefit Analysis of Environmental Protection:*

<http://0-www.jstor.org.oasys.lib.oxy.edu/stable/pdf/3312947.pdf>

*Social Cost of Carbon:*

<https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/Downloads/EPAactivities/social-cost-carbon.pdf>

*Market Mechanisms: Understanding Solutions:*

<https://www.c2es.org/docUploads/market-mechanisms-brief.pdf>

Week 6: Wednesday, February 24

Guest Speakers: Mad Stano, Greelining Institute and Ingrid Brostrom, Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment

Market-based solutions, part 2

*Lawsuit by low-income groups may delay climate law:*  
<http://californiawatch.org/dailyreport/lawsuit-low-income-groups-may-delay-climate-law-8582>

*Why the environmental justice lawsuit against California's climate law is misguided:*  
<http://grist.org/climate-policy/2011-05-23-environmental-justice-lawsuit-against-californias-climate-law/>

*Determining the Fate of AB 32:* <https://www.law360.com/articles/226089/determining-the-fate-of-ab-32>

*Landmark U.S. Federal Climate Lawsuit:* <https://www.ourchildrenstrust.org/us/federal-lawsuit/>

**Week 7: Wednesday, March 3- TAKE HOME MIDTERM DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS, DUE THURSDAY, MARCH 4 at 5pm**

**Week 8: Wednesday, March 10: NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK**

Week 9: Wednesday, March 17

Guest lecture: Dr. Billy Fleming, Director, McHarg Center, University of Pennsylvania

Climate solutions: The Green New Deal (readings to come)

Designing a Green New Deal.

Week 10: Wednesday, March 24

Guest lecture: Dr. Lara Skinner, executive director, Worker Institute, Cornell University

Climate solutions: Climate Jobs

*Reversing Inequality and Combatting Climate Change: A Climate Jobs Program for New York State:* <https://www.ilr.cornell.edu/worker-institute/nys-projects/reversing-inequality-combatting-climate-change>

Dimitris Stevis, *Green Jobs? Good Jobs? Just Jobs? USA Labour Unions Confront Climate Change:*  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283297601\\_Green\\_Jobs\\_Good\\_Jobs\\_Just\\_Jobs\\_USA\\_Labour\\_Unions\\_Confront\\_Climate\\_Change](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283297601_Green_Jobs_Good_Jobs_Just_Jobs_USA_Labour_Unions_Confront_Climate_Change)

Week 11: Wednesday, March 31

Climate solutions: Just Transition

J. Mijin Cha, *A Just Transition: Why Transitioning Workers into a New Clean Energy Economy Should Be at the Center of Climate Change Policies:*

<https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1796&context=elr>

Cha, et. al, *A Roadmap to an Equitable Low-Carbon Future: Four Pillars for a Just Transition:* [https://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/242/docs/JUST\\_TRANSITION\\_Report\\_FINAL\\_12-19.pdf](https://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/242/docs/JUST_TRANSITION_Report_FINAL_12-19.pdf)

Week 12: Wednesday, April 7: IN-CLASS PREP FOR PRESENTATIONS

Week 13: Wednesday, April 14- IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS

Week 14: Wednesday, April 21- IN-CLASS PRESENTATION

**FINAL PAPER DUE: FRIDAY, APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup> AT 5PM**