

Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur

Proposal for a New Course

Course Title: The Political Economy of Climate Change

Course No: MBAXXX

Lecture per week: 3-0-0-0 (5)

Duration of Course: Half Semester/Modular

Proposing Department: Management Sciences

Proposing Instructors: Jothsna Rajan

Course Description: There is overwhelming scientific consensus on the anthropogenic nature of climate change and the necessity of immediate action to mitigate the effects. But political action at the national and international stages have not kept pace with the urgency of the problem. In this course, we draw on a broad array of readings to understand the normative and empirical challenges to decisive political action against climate change. Why have political actors found it difficult to agree on an effective response to climate change? What might a just response to climate change look like? We also discuss the politics of climate change denial and survey the proposed solutions to climate change.

Course Objectives: Through this course, students will:

- Understand the scientific basis of climate change and the need for policies to address it
- Evaluate the broad history of climate negotiations and understand how and why politics has hindered the implementation of climate change policies
- Understand climate change denial as a political position
- Analyse the political viability of real-life climate change policies at the domestic and international levels.

Pre-requisites, if any: NONE

Short Summary for Inclusion in the courses of study booklet

Climate Change as a political problem; History of the International Climate Negotiations; **Empirical Political Science:** Why is a political solution to climate change so difficult?; Public opinion challenge; Coordination challenge; Economic challenge; **Interest Groups and Advocacy;** Politics of climate change denial; Role of Media; Expertise and democracy; **Ethical dimensions of climate change;** Distribution and economic inequality; What we owe to the future generations; **Proposed policy solutions:** Environmental federalism and its critics, ecomodernism and its critics, market-based approach and its critics, regulation approach and its critics, geo-engineering and its critics.

Course Content

Title	Sessions
Climate Change as a political problem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The science of climate change. • Framing climate change as a political problem • Contradictions of climate economics and capitalism 	2
History of the International Climate Negotiations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rio to Copenhagen • Paris to Now 	2
Empirical Political Science: Why is a political solution to climate change so difficult? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public opinion challenge • Coordination challenge • Economic challenge 	3
Interest Groups and Advocacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politics of climate change denial • Role of Media • Role of Experts in Democracy 	2
Ethical dimensions of climate change: What would a just response look like? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics of climate change • Distribution • Future Generations 	2
Policy: How should we tackle climate change? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed solutions to climate change and their critics • Environmental federalism, ecomodernism, market-based approaches, regulation approaches, geo-engineering 	3

Recommended Readings:

Adam Tooze. (2020, October 17). Welcome to the Final Battle for the Climate. *Foreign Policy*

Bhar, Soumyajit, & Lele, Sharachchandra. (2025). Luxury Consumption in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2.

Boykoff, Maxwell T., & Boykoff, Jules M. (2007). Climate change and journalistic norms: A case-study of US mass-media coverage. *Geoforum*, 38(6), 1190–1204.

Bulkeley, Harriet. (2010). Cities and the Governing of Climate Change. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 35 (Volume 35, 2010), 229–253.

Burke, Marshall, Hsiang, Solomon M., & Miguel, Edward. (2015). Climate and Conflict. *Annual Review of Economics*, 7(Volume 7, 2015), 577–617. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-economics-080614-115430>

Cann, Heather W., & Raymond, Leigh. (2018). Does climate denialism still matter? The prevalence of alternative frames in opposition to climate policy. *Environmental Politics*, 27(3), 433–454. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2018.1439353>

Colgan, Jeff D., Green, Jessica F., & Hale, Thomas N. (2021). Asset Revaluation and the Existential Politics of Climate Change. *International Organization*, 75(2), 586–610. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818320000296>

Dubash, Navroz K. (2025). Domesticating Climate Change. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2.

Gardiner, Stephen M. (2006). A Perfect Moral Storm: Climate Change, Intergenerational Ethics and the Problem of Moral Corruption1. *Environmental Values*, 15(3), 397–413. <https://doi.org/10.3197/096327106778226293>

Ghosh, Shibani. (2025). Pollution Regulation in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2.

Hickel, Jason. (2019). Degrowth: A theory of radical abundance. *Real-World Economics Review*, 87(19), 54–68.

Hickel, Jason. (2022). *A new political economy for a healthy planet*.

Hovi, Jon, Sprinz, Detlef F., & Underdal, Arild. (2009). Implementing Long-Term Climate Policy: Time Inconsistency, Domestic Politics, International Anarchy. *Global Environmental Politics*, 9(3), 20–39.

IPCC. (2023). Summary for Policymakers. In *Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, H. Lee and J. Romero (eds.)]* (pp. 1–34). IPCC. [10.59327/IPCC/AR6-9789291691647.001](https://doi.org/10.59327/IPCC/AR6-9789291691647.001)

Jacobs, Alan M., & Matthews, J. Scott. (2012). Why Do Citizens Discount the Future? Public Opinion and the Timing of Policy Consequences. *British Journal of Political Science*, 42(4), 903–935. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123412000117>

Keohane, Robert O. (2015). The Global Politics of Climate Change: Challenge for Political Science. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 48(1), 19–26.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096514001541>

Kiran Pandey & Rajit Sengupta. (2024). *Climate India 2024: An Assessment of Extreme Weather Events*. Down To Earth. <https://www.cseindia.org/climate-india-2024-an-assessment-of-extreme-weather-events-12460>

Koubi, Vally. (2019). Climate Change and Conflict. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 22(Volume 22, 2019), 343–360. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-050317-070830>

Madhusudan, M. D., & Sinha, Anindya. (2025). Saving Wildlife in a Changing India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2.

Oreskes, Naomi, & Conway, Erik M. (2011). *Merchants of doubt: How a handful of scientists obscured the truth on issues from tobacco smoke to global warming*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

Patel, Raj, & Moore, Jason W. (2017). *A history of the world in seven cheap things: A guide to capitalism, nature, and the future of the planet*. Univ of California Press.

Prior, Markus. (2005). News vs. Entertainment: How Increasing Media Choice Widens Gaps in Political Knowledge and Turnout. *American Journal of Political Science*, 49(3), 577–592.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2005.00143.x>

Thompson, Alexander. (2006). Management Under Anarchy: The International Politics of Climate Change. *Climatic Change*, 78(1), 7–29. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-006-9090-x>

Wallace-Wells, David. (2019). *The uninhabitable earth: A story of the future*. Penguin UK.

Any Other Remarks: NA

Date: 25 Feb 2025



Proposer: Jothsna Rajan

DPGC Convenor:

Date:

The course is approved/not approved

Chair, SPGC:

Date: