

JOUR 311 / CMNS 363: Climate Change Communication

DePaul University, College of Communication

Section 201 / 501, Class 2504 / 25225, Winter Quarter 2018

Room 314 Arts and Letters Hall, Lincoln Park Campus, Monday / Wednesday 3:10 to 4:40 p.m.

Instructor: Dr. Jill Hopke, Assistant Professor of Journalism

Contact: jhopke@depaul.edu (*I strive to respond to emails within one business day, excluding weekends*); 312-362-7641 (office)

Office location: 1123 Daley, 14 E. Jackson, Loop Campus

Office hours: Mondays 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. and Wednesdays 11:00 to 11:30 a.m. in my Loop office; directly following class in the LPC (*and by email appointment*)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jillhopke>

Course Description

Individuals make up their minds on climate change, energy development, and other science of pressing public policy importance through a complex set of factors: values, demographics, political ideology, and so on. Journalists, strategic communicators, scientists, and policy analysts need to be able to communicate effectively with diverse public audiences on climate and energy topics. This course is oriented from a science communication perspective and draws on social scientific research on communicating on climate change and energy issues. We will take a human perspective on climate issues and focuses on the social, political and cultural aspects of climate change. The course covers best practices for promoting and facilitating public dialogue on climate change policy and global energy systems. Topics covered include: climate change public opinion and knowledge, media portrayals of climate change and its societal effects, climate skepticism and denial, psychological factors that contribute to values and beliefs on climate science, journalism and covering climate issues, framing and developing narratives on climate impacts, and climate change in popular culture. Students will conduct original research to analyze and evaluate climate change communication. For the final project, students have the option of completing a major journalistic reporting project, designing an advocacy or marketing campaign, or conducting a research project.

Learning Objectives

After completing this course, you should be able to:

- Explain the function of communication in shaping attitudes, values, practices and policy on climate change and energy issues in the United States and internationally;
- Understand the role of worldviews, perceptions, and beliefs in shaping public opinion on climate change and energy development;
- Understand the roots of climate denialism in a U.S. political context and internationally;
- Identify and evaluate mechanisms for communicating on climate science and energy issues; and
- Identify and evaluate rhetoric and visual communication generated, and used by, those communicating about climate change and energy topics.

Readings

This course will be based primarily on a curated list of readings available for each weekly module through the course D2L site.

Recommended text (if you don't come to the class with a solid foundation in the science of climate change, please read this brief book):

- Maslin, M. (2014). *Climate change: A very short introduction* (third edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Grading and Assignments

The conventional 10-point letter-grade scale will be used. The specific grading scale follows the recommendation of the College of Communication: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D (60-69), F (≤ 59).

Late work is not accepted. All assignments will be turned-in via the class D2L site.

10% of your grade comes from participation. This includes in-class participation, attendance and active engagement in our shared learning community. This includes in-class activities and discussions, as well as keeping-up with course material and updates on the d2l site.

10% of your grade comes from discussion leadership. Once in the quarter you will be responsible to be a discussion leader (in groups of two students). When you are assigned to be discussion leader, you will be expected to provide a 1 to 2-page individual double-spaced summary of the class period's readings in ADVANCE of class via d2l. The reading summaries will be shared with the class under the week's "content" module on d2l.

Reading summaries should be turned-in via the d2l "submissions" folder for that week by 11:59 p.m. the day BEFORE your assigned discussion leadership slot. So, if you are discussion leader for a Wednesday class, your reading summary is due at the end of the day Tuesday.

Working with your partner you will prepare 3 to 5 discussion questions on the readings and lead the class in a discussion, with my guidance, on the readings. You are encouraged to consult with me on your discussion topics and the reading's themes in advance of your assigned discussion leadership class period.

25% of your grade comes from the in-class midterm exam. The exam will include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Midterm is in week 6 of the quarter.

15% of your grade comes from an annotated bibliography and final project proposal. Your annotated bibliography will include at least 10 scholarly, peer-reviewed sources related to your final research paper, or project (e.g. a journalistic piece of major reporting, the design of an advocacy campaign), topic. You will include a list of the citations in APA format. For each entry, you will provide an approximately 150-word summary of the citation in your own words.

In addition, you will turn in a short two-page double-spaced research paper, or project, proposal outlining your topic, thesis statement and major arguments. You may also include an outline.

40% of your grade comes from the final research paper, or major project. You will write a research paper, or conduct and report on a major project, on some aspect of climate change communication or energy issue (e.g. in-depth piece of original journalistic reporting, design an advocacy or marketing campaign). If you choose the major project final option it is your responsibility to meet with me to agree upon project guidelines that meets an equivalent workload as the research paper or journalistic reporting option.

The research paper option should be a double-spaced, 7 to 10 pages paper (plus references, not included in the page count), well-written and proof-read for grammatical and spelling errors and including at least 10 scholarly, peer-reviewed sources (building on your annotated bibliography), plus any additional reputable sources (e.g. non-partisan think tanks, nonprofit organizations, the Pew Research Center, George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication).

The journalistic reporting project option should be an in-depth piece of original reporting (1,000 words), based on in-person interviews (minimum four, including at least one expert), integrating a basic data visualization appropriate to your topic, and the integration of relevant peer-reviewed research. You should pitch your story idea to one of the campus media outlets to seek publication (not required to be published by the end of the quarter, just evidence you are seeking out publication).

Late work – Late work is not accepted. I will only consider exceptions to this policy in cases that are verified through the Dean of Students Office for a “medical, mental health or personal reason.” It is your responsibility to submit documentation to the Dean of Students office in a timely fashion. Exceptions to this policy are at the sole discretion of the faculty member. Even in cases of verified absences excessively late submissions will not be permitted.

Information on the Dean of Students Office’s “absence notification” policy and the form to submit to their office can be found at: <http://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/support-services/academic/Pages/absence-notification.aspx>

If you have a personal situation affecting your performance and engagement in our class, please contact me so that I can help identify campus resources that could be of assistance.

If you have a scheduled reason for which you need to miss class on the day an assignment is due (or something that could be reasonably foreseen), it is YOUR responsibility to complete the work and submit it IN ADVANCE of the deadline.

Grading – An overview of the grading expectations is as follows:

A-level work: Very little improvement necessary to be published. Challenging and interesting story idea, research paper or project topic executed completely as requested by the assignment. The story is thorough, informative and well written. No minor grammatical, AP style or other writing errors.

B-level work: Needs a little more retouching. Good story idea, research paper or project topic with solid reporting, research and writing behind the product, but more time spent on story development and revision required to improve the output. Typically, needs improvement on story focus.

C-level work: Effort and promise, but much execution must be improved in multiple categories. Commonly, repeated grammatical errors, basic style errors, lack of attention to detail and/or shoddy reporting are present. Document met only basic minimum satisfactory requirements and expectations.

Unsatisfactory-level work (D or F): Very little effort was made. Instructions were not followed. Reporting incomplete or only part of assignment completed. Major revisions necessary, did not make an attempt and/or plagiarized.

Verification

You are required to provide contact information for *every* person you interview, if you choose the journalistic reporting final option, or conduct interviews for the project or research paper option, with your D2L submission, including phone number and e-mail address. You will include a reference list with each assignment, in the case of any secondary or data sources.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Plagiarism means taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as your own, including, but not limited to, failing to include full attribution to the source of any material which is not your original creation and using the material of others in cases where original authorship is expected. This includes photographs, infographics and any multimedia material. You are expected to provide sources for all material that cannot be reasonably considered common knowledge (e.g. Chicago is located in IL; Chicago has two baseball teams). This includes any idea or piece of information that is not original to you. Plagiarism will result in an "F" for the assignment and for the course. It may lead to dismissal from the university.

Failing to act with academic integrity is detrimental to DePaul's values, including the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. University academic integrity violations include, but are not limited to, the following: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification; misuse of academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct.

Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by university officials. Furthermore, all work done for this course should comply with the University Academic Integrity Policy available in the student handbook or at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu>.

Sexual Harassment

This class will faithfully follow university guidelines on sexual harassment. Such behavior will not be tolerated and may lead to dismissal from the university.

Writing Support

The Writing Center, at the Lincoln Park and Loop campuses, is available for consultation on all aspects of writing assignments. Writing Center tutors are specially trained undergraduate and graduate students who can help at any stage of the quarter or in your process. Visit <http://www.depaul.edu/writing> for more information.

Attendance

Doing well in this class requires you to be in class and actively participate. Class attendance is mandatory. More than two (2) absences will negatively impact your course grade, as will being repeatedly late for class meetings. In addition, “phoning” (see below) in class will result in you being counted absent for the class period.

Your attendance and active participation are expected and required. Participation grades are factored by considering how often you participate in class and how that participation advances our overall learning (i.e., I will consider how your questions help lead us to a greater understanding of concepts and technical skills, as well as how your contributions further our discussion). If you miss very few classes and your participation level is excellent, you can expect an “A” for this portion of your grade. If you miss very few classes and your participation level is above average (i.e., you participate during most class sessions rather than every class session), you can expect a “B” for this portion of your grade. If you miss very few classes and your participation level is average (i.e., you contribute sometimes or your contributions don’t elevate our thinking enough), you can expect a “C” for this portion of your grade. If you miss a significant number of class meetings and your participation level is average, you can expect a “D” for this portion of your grade.

If you miss class, please review the class meeting materials on the D2L site and talk with me upon your return to follow-up on what you have missed.

Classroom Etiquette

No *phoning* (aka, non-course related device usage) in class! It is a distraction to your classmates and disrespectful to me—the instructor—and will lower your course grade.

In the interest of supporting a focused, engaged learning community this quarter ALL devices (computers, tablets, mobile phones) are to remain in your backpacks, bags, etc. (i.e. in silenced mode, out of your hands and out of sight) throughout each class period, unless specifically required for a classroom activity. Disregarding this rule will negatively impact your grade.

Professionalism

Remember that out in the Chicago community you are representing DePaul and our Journalism Program. My expectation is that you will conduct yourself appropriately and professionally wherever your reporting takes you this quarter.

Academic Accommodations

Students who require accommodations for any type of disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate reasonable accommodation based on your individual situation, it is preferable if you contact me during the first week of class. Also, make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities. They are located at (and reachable via email at csd@depaul.edu):

Lincoln Park

Center for Students with Disabilities
2250 North Sheffield Avenue - Student Center 370
Chicago, Illinois 60614-3673
773.325.1677 main phone
773.325.3720 fax
773.325.7276 TTY

Loop

Center for Students with Disabilities - Lewis Center 1420
25 East Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60604-2287
312.362.8002 main phone
312.362.6544 fax

On a personal note, I am hard-of-hearing and may request that you speak-up during classroom discussions, because I want to hear from you!

Weekly Topics and Readings

Week 1: Introduction to Science Communication and Climate Change Communication

- Hulme, M. (2009). The Social Meaning of Climate. *Why We Disagree about Climate Change: Understanding Controversy, Inaction and Opportunity* (pp. 1-34). Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Painter, J. (2013). When Uncertainty is Certain. *Climate Change in the Media: Reporting Risk and Uncertainty* (pp. 11-24). Oxford, UK: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.
- Corner, A. & Clarke, J. (2017). Is Climate Change Different? *Talking Climate: From Research to Practice in Public Engagement* (pp. 15-34). London; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Week 2: Worldviews, Politics, and Perceptions of Climate Science

- Gunster, S. (2017). Engaging Climate Communication: Audiences, Frames, Values and Norms. In R. A. Hackett, S. Forde, S. Gunster, and K. Foxwell-Norton (Eds.), *Journalism and Climate Crisis: Public Engagement, Media Alternatives* (pp. 49-76). New York: Routledge.
- Priest, S. (2016). What's the Rush? Reacting to a Slow-Moving Disaster. *Communicating Climate Change: The Path Forward* (pp. 23-42). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Harvey, C. (2015, July 27). 40 Percent of Adults on Earth Have Never Heard of Climate Change. *Washington Post*. Available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2015/07/27/these-are-the-factors-that-affect-how-people-feel-about-climate-change-and-whether-they-even-know-it-exists/>
- Mecklin, J. (2017, August 23). Climate communication: Are apocalyptic messages ever effective? Yale Climate Connections. Available at: <https://www.yaleclimateconnections.org/2017/08/climate-communication-do-apocalyptic-messages-work/>

Week 3: The Public Sphere and Communication Contests over Energy Development

No class meeting on Monday, January 15 to observe MLK Day.

- Supran, G. & Oreskes, N. (2017, August 22). What Exxon Mobil Didn't Say About Climate Change. *New York Times* (opinion article). Available at: <https://nyti.ms/2vn1Yy2>
- Inside Climate News. (2015). Exxon: The Road Not Taken. Read two articles from the investigative reporting series available at: <https://insideclimatenews.org/content/Exxon-The-Road-Not-Taken>
- Hopke, J. (2015, December 5). Climate Activists Take to Social Media for Paris Summit, But Who Are They Reaching? *The Conversation US*. Available at:

<https://theconversation.com/climate-activists-take-to-social-media-for-paris-summit-but-who-are-they-reaching-51716>

Week 4: Science Journalism on Climate Change

- Gurwitt, S., Malkki, K., & Mitra, M. (2017). Global issue, developed country bias: The Paris climate conference as covered by daily print news organizations in 13 nations. *Climatic Change*, 143(3-4), 281-296. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10584-017-2004-2>
- Nassanga, G. et al. (2016). Climate Change and Development Journalism in the Global South. In R. Kunelius, E. Eide, M. Tegelberg, and D. Yagodin (Eds.), *Media and Global Climate Knowledge: Journalism and the IPCC* (pp. 213-233). London; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Painter, J. (2016). Journalistic Depictions of Uncertainty about Climate Change. *ORE Climate Science*. Available at: <http://climatescience.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228620-e-346?rskey=UJTC0N&result=70>
- Fahy, D. (2017). Defining Objectivity, False Balance, and Advocacy in News Coverage of Climate Change. *ORE Climate Science*. Available at: <http://climatescience.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228620-e-345?rskey=UJTC0N&result=50>

Week 5: Climate Science News Audiences and Theories of Media Effects

- Shanahan, J. (2017). Agenda Building, Narratives, and Attention Cycles in Climate Change News Coverage. *ORE Climate Science*. Available at: <http://climatescience.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228620-e-347?rskey=UJTC0N&result=1>
- Nisbet, M. C. (2009). Communicating Climate Change: Why Frames Matter for Public Engagement. *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 51(2), pp. 12-23.
- Holthaus, E. (2017, July 10). Stop Scaring People about Climate Change. It Doesn't Work. *Grist*. Available at: <http://grist.org/climate-energy/stop-scaring-people-about-climate-change-it-doesnt-work/>
- McSweeney, R. & Evans, S. (2017, August 29). Media Reaction: Hurricane Harvey and Climate Change. *CarbonBrief*. Available at: <https://www.carbonbrief.org/media-reaction-hurricane-harvey-climate-change>

Week 6: In-class Midterm Exam

No new readings. Study for the midterm exam to be held in class Wednesday, February 7.

Week 7: Politicization and Climate Denial

- Oreskes, N. (2004). The Scientific Consensus on Climate Change. *Science*, 306(7502), p. 1686.
- Oreskes, N. & Conway, E. M. (2011). The Denial of Global Warming. *Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming* (pp. 169-215). New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Cook, J. (2016). Countering Climate Science Denial and Communicating Scientific Consensus. *ORE Climate Science*. Available at: <http://climatescience.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228620-e-314?rskey=UJTC0N&result=48>

Week 8: Climate Change in Popular Culture and Developing New Climate Narratives

- Corner, A. & Clarke, J. (2017). Five Principles and a Model for Public Engagement. *Talking Climate: From Research to Practice in Public Engagement* (pp. 107-126). London; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Poppleton, K. et al. (2017). *Climate Convenings Toolkit*. Climate Generation. PDF on d2l.
- Kiehl, J. T. (2016). Facing Our Fears Associated with Climate Change. *Facing Climate Change: An Integrated Path to the Future* (pp. 28-42). New York: Columbia University Press.
- Svoboda, M. (2017, August 29). The ever-inconvenient Gore. Yale Climate Connections. Available at: <https://www.yaleclimateconnections.org/2017/08/the-ever-inconvenient-gore/>

Annotated bibliography and final project proposal due by 11:59 p.m. Monday, February 19 via d2l "submissions" folder.

Week 9: Visual Communication on Climate Impacts and Solutions

- Kiehl, J. T. (2016). How Images Facilitate Transformation. *Facing Climate Change: An Integrated Path to the Future* (pp. 45-56). New York: Columbia University Press.
- Sheppard, S. R. J. (2012). Limited Vision: Understanding Perceptual Problems with Climate Change. *Visualizing Climate Change: A Guide to Visual Communication of Climate Change and Developing Local Solutions* (pp. 21-40). New York: Earthscan, Routledge.
- Resource Media. (2016). *What They See Matters: Visual Communication Takeaways from Audience Research and Tips for Testing Images*. Available at: <http://www.climateadvocacylab.org/system/files/What-They-See-Matters-Image-Testing-Guide.pdf>
- Corner, A. et al. (2016). *Climate Visuals: Seven Principles for Visual Climate Change Communication (based on international social research)*. Climate Outreach. Available at: <http://climateoutreach.org/resources/visual-climate-change-communication/>

Week 10: Advocacy and Communicating Global Climate Action

- Moser, S. (2017, September). Communicating Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience. *ORE Climate Science*. Available at: <http://climatescience.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228620-e-436?rskey=UJTC0N&result=41>
- Doyle, J. (2007). Picturing the Clima(c)tic: Greenpeace and the Representational Politics of Climate Change Communication. *Science as Culture*, 16(2), pp. 129-150. doi: 10.1080/09505430701368938.
- Hestres, L. E. & Nisbet, M. C. (*forthcoming, 2018*). Environmental Advocacy at the Dawn of the Trump Era. In *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the Twenty-First Century* (10th edition). CQ Press. Available at: http://www.luishestres.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Hestres_Nisbet_Environmental_Advocacy_Dawn_Trump_era_PROOF_2017.pdf

Time will be allotted for students to fill-out student evaluations in class during week 10. Your feedback is important. Thank you.

Week 11: Role of Media, Scientific Experts, Policymakers, and Academic Institutions and Course Wrap-up

- Painter, J. (2013). Conclusions and Recommendations. *Climate Change in the Media: Reporting Risk and Uncertainty* (pp. 135-142). Oxford, UK: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.
- Mukherjee, I. & Howlett, M. (2016). Communicating about Climate Change with Policymakers. *ORE Climate Science*. Available at: <http://climatescience.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228620-e-416?rskey=UJTC0N&result=37>
- Figueres, C. et al. (2017, June 29). Three Years to Safeguard Our Climate. *Nature* (comment), 546, pp. 593–595. Available at: <https://www.nature.com/news/three-years-to-safeguard-our-climate-1.22201>

FINAL PROJECTS DUE by 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, March 13: Turn in final projects via D2L submissions folder by 11:59 p.m. No late work will be accepted.