

**Sociology 134EC/Environmental Studies 134EC
Earth in Crisis**

Fall 2019

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2-3:15 p.m.

Embarcadero Hall

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:45 - 1:45 p.m. at Campus Point café in Isla Vista, and Fridays, noon to 1 p.m. on campus at the Coral Tree Cafe. Also by appointment (the best policy is to e-mail or see me after class to reserve a spot – I'll also do lots of e-mail consultation!)

Zack King, Teaching Assistant for Sociology sections and Head TA

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Office hours: Tuesdays: 10am-12pm

David Feldman, Teaching Assistant for Sociology sections

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Joslyn Fritz, Teaching Assistant for Environmental Studies sections

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Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays: 11am-12pm

Sections

For Sociology with David Feldman and Zack King:

Wednesdays, 8:00-8:50 a.m. in North Hall 1111

Wednesdays, 9:00-9:50 a.m. in Girvetz 2127

Fridays, 8:00-8:50 a.m. in Phelps 1508

Fridays, 9:00-9:50 a.m. in Phelps 1508

For Environmental Studies, with Joslyn Fritz:

Wednesdays, 8-8:50 a.m. in North Hall 1109

Thursdays, 11-11:50 a.m. in Girvetz 2120

Statement of Purpose

This is the situation today on our Earth in crisis: we are in a *huge* mess! So it's time to *really* wake up...

The purpose of this course is to get our heads around this new reality and to explore together and collaboratively the implications of this for living in and creating, at a minimum, a survivable future, and potentially, a much improved, more just one than we have today. *This course is therefore all about knowledge and positive action to secure such a better future.*

Outline of meetings

Thursday, September 26. Start-up

Tuesday, October 1 and Thursday, October 3. This Civilization is Finished. Now what?

Readings

Rupert Read and Samuel Alexander, *This Civilization is Finished: Conversations on the End of Empire - and what lies beyond* (Melbourne: Simplicity Institute, 2019).

Tuesday, October 8 and Thursday, October 10. Inside and outside the UN climate Negotiations

Readings

John Foran and Richard Widick, “Whose Utopia? – Our Utopia! Competing Visions of the Future at the UN Climate Talks.” *Nature and Culture*, “Socialities of Nature Beyond Utopia” 11 (3) (2016): 296-321.

“Not Yet the End of the World: Political Cultures of Opposition and Creation in the Global Youth Climate Justice Movement.” With Corrie Ellis and Summer Gray. Pp. 353-379 in *Interface: A Journal for and about Social Movements*. Volume 9. Issue 2. November/December 2017. <http://www.interfacejournal.net/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Interface-9-2-Foran-Gray-Grosse.pdf>

NXTerra website: <http://live-nxterra-ucop-edu-v01.pantheonsite.io/topic-global-climate-governance/>

In-class screening of *Climate Deadline Paris* (Richard Widick, 2015, 68 minutes).

Tuesday, October 15. The global climate justice movement: An introduction

Readings

“The Principles of Environmental Justice (EJ),” First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, held on October 24-27, 1991, Washington DC, <http://ej4all.org/ej-principles> and “Principles of Working Together.”

Brian Tokar, “On the evolution and continuing development of the climate justice movement,” in Tahseen Jafry, editor, *Routledge Handbook of Climate Justice* (New

York: Routledge, 2019).

Naomi Klein, “Blockadia: The New Climate Warriors,” chapter 9 in *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate* (Simon and Schuster, 2014).

NXTerra website: <http://live-nxterra-ucop-edu-v01.pantheonsite.io/topic-climate-justice-movements/>

Thursday, October 17. The global climate justice movement: What do activists do?

Readings/websites to explore

350.org – <https://350.org/about/>

Climate Justice Alliance – <https://climatejusticealliance.org/>

Democratic Socialists of America Ecosocialism Working Group – <https://www.dsausa.org/about-us/what-is-democratic-socialism/>

Extinction Rebellion – <https://rebellion.earth/> and <https://extinctionrebellion.us/>

Health of Mother Earth HOME Foundation – <https://homef.org/>

Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance – <https://www.pacja.org/>

Sunrise Movement – <https://www.sunrisemovement.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/sunrisemvmnts/>

Fridays for Future – <https://www.youthclimatestrikeus.org/>

Fossil Free UC website – <https://fossilfreeuc.net/>

Fossil Free UC on Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/FossilFreeUC/>

Indigenous Environmental Network – <https://www.ienearth.org/>

Tuesday, October 22. The global climate justice movement today and tomorrow

Readings

John Foran, “The Varieties of Hope” (June 2018), <https://www.resilience.org/stories/2018-07-02/the-varieties-of-hope/>

Paul Abela, “Could climate strikes lead to a global revolution?” September 22, 2019, <https://medium.com/@abelapaul1/could-climate-strikes-lead-to-a-global-revolution-98d9141e772d>

Laurence Cox, “Dear XR, why not be more honest with your participants? Or, why thinking about social movements actually matters” (October 2019),
<https://whysocialmovementsmatter.com/news/2019/10/3/dear-xr-why-not-be-more-honest-with-your-participants>

Thursday, October 24. An ecovillage in your backyard?

Reading

John Foran, “From Isla Vista to Eco Vista: A Design Project in Community Resilience” – grant proposal (March 2018).

Diana Leafe Christian, “Starting a Successful Urban Ecovillage,” *Hopedance Magazine* #51 (August 2009), <http://www.hopedance.org/home/housing-news/1218-941>

Websites:

The Transition Network: <https://transitionnetwork.org/>

Transition United States – <http://www.transitionus.org/about-us>

Eco Vista – <https://ecovistacommunity.com/>

Global Ecovillage Network – <http://gen.ecovillage.org/en/article/what-ecovillage>

Tuesday, October 29 and Thursday, October 31. *Demain/Tomorrow*

Readings

Have a look at *Demain*’s website, which is rich in content, solutions, and ideas for this class:
<https://www.demain-lefilm.com/en/film>

Rob Hopkins, “The unstoppable rise of Demain” (February 5, 2016),
<http://www.resilience.org/stories/2016-02-05/the-unstoppable-rise-of-demain>

Screening: *Demain/Tomorrow* (Elle Driver, 2016, 115 minutes).

Tuesday, November 5 and Thursday, November 7. Some systemic alternatives

This week’s meetings will be a plunge into to the amazing array of alternative ideas, practices, and experiments from all over the world. Our text is the new book, *Pluriverse*. We will work out how to accomplish this feat together...

Reading

Alberto Acosta, Federico Demaria, Arturo Escobar, Ashish Kothari, Ariel Salleh, *Pluriverse: A Post-Development Dictionary* (New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2019), selected chapters.

Tuesday, November 12, Thursday, November 14, Tuesday, November 19, and Thursday, November 21. Green New Deal Conference and Deliberation

Readings

Text of the Resolution (February 5, 2019), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-resolution/109/text>

Bernie Sanders and the Green New deal packet.

Tuesday, November 26. How to confront the climate crisis: a class discussion

Thursday, November 28. Thanksgiving break

Tuesday, December 3 and Thursday, December 5. Zoom from COP 25, and final thoughts

Course Assignments¹

Policy on plagiarism: don't!

Class and section attendance and participation: do! It's ten percent of your grade.

Five reading response essays and five comments on others' response essays: Ten percent of your grade for each

In five successive weeks (between Tuesday, October 1, and Thursday, October 31), on either the Tuesday or the Thursday, you will be expected to write and post on Gauchospace a *reading response essay* of about 300-400 words on one or more of the day's assigned readings [*or in some weeks, websites or films*] **before class**.

In addition, before every Thursday class, you should post a reply or around 100 words to one of your classmates' response essays from Tuesday or the Thursday itself.

In your reading response essays, *engage* one or more of the readings with some variant of one of the following prompts: 1) write about something that was important to you, whether you agreed with the author or not, and explain why; 2) engage the main argument(s) of the reading(s) with one of your own; and/or 3) explain how one or more the readings relate to each other, to you, and to the world. You may include quotations that are useful for your argument.

End your memo with *one open-ended discussion* question for the class that emerges from the issues you raised in your response. Feel free to write informally or in the first person. You may include

¹ **Paper style:** The formatting guidelines for all papers in this course are 1" margins all around and 12-point size. We would like all papers double-spaced. For grammar and other writing matters, see John Foran, "Tips for Writers." *All papers are to be submitted on Gauchospace. Put your name on everything you post!*

your emotions and feelings if you want. However, please spellcheck your work and make sure it makes sense. In our writing, we should be respectful of other peoples' views and keep our minds open.

Your reply of around 100 words or so to a class member's reading response should be addressed to the person to whom you are replying, so indicate their first and last names. Pick someone's response that interests you, provokes thoughts, even disagreement, and/or enlightens a subject for you. It is fine if a more than one person replies to the same response memo.

Note: all your reading responses and replies will be available to read by class members, so if you have time after posting yours, see what your classmates are talking about!

Two longer essays: 20 percent of your grade for each

The Green New Deal: The class project paper

This quarter we will engage in an exciting collective project that will illuminate the possibilities and difficulties of the Green New Deal(s) as approaches to the problems of an Earth in crisis. We will devote significant class and section time to preparing for and doing this, and it will require careful original research and inspired group work on your part.

The project will take the form of a full-on dramatic role-playing exercise and each class member will be part of a team that will advocate some particular approach to the Green New Deal [there are already many ideas circulating and proposals written about it].

At the end of the role-play each individual will write an essay of about 1,000 words on the project. This paper will be due by midnight on Sunday, November 24.

Note: Guidelines for the role play exercise and the paper will be developed and posted on GauchoSpace by the end of week four.

A final essay on Earth in crisis...

The topics and guidelines for this paper will be developed and posted on GauchoSpace before Thanksgiving. This paper will be due by midnight on Sunday, December 9.