About the Course

Culture and environment are intimately entangled. Now, global climate change is altering culture-environment relations in profound ways. How we acknowledge, experience, and respond to our changing environment will depend as much—perhaps more—on cultural factors as with science and technology. This course introduces students to the field of Cultural Geography, with an emphasis on culture-environment interactions in the context of a changing global climate. In Cultural Geography we will explore these interactions and ask:

- How does culture shape our understanding of climate?
- How does climate shape our sense of place?
- How are climate and global warming reflected in visual and performing arts?
- How are indigenous cultures being affected by and responding to global warming?
- How is global warming altering cultures of food production and consumption in different places?

Although the focus of the course is the interactions between culture and climate, we will pay some attention to the science of climate change. Specifically, we will rely on summaries of the most recent science presented by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the international scientific body responsible for compiling the results of climate research worldwide.

Learning Outcomes

Students will gain knowledge of the interactions of culture and climate change and be able to:

1. Explain why and how indigenous cultures are affected by and responding to climate change.
2. Recognize how culture influences our perception of climate and climate change.
3. Recognize and describe the ways that climate change is reflected in the visual, literary, and performing arts.
4. Explain how the changing climate is altering cultures of food production and consumption.

Teaching and Learning Practices

This course is offered in a hybrid format, which means that students will be responsible for conducting a variety of activities online through FIU’s CANVAS learning management system. Online learning requires students to be significantly self-motivated and disciplined. To be successful one must consistently log on to the course site, keep up with the syllabus, and remain aware of deadlines. Aside from the textbooks, everything needed for the course will be found on
the CANVAS course site. Therefore, access to a computer and the Internet is essential. Should you not have reliable computer access at home, there are computers in the FIU libraries and at other campus locations. A computer malfunction, unless it is a problem with CANVAS itself, is not a legitimate excuse for missing an assignment, activity, or deadline.

During our weekly classroom meetings, we will employ a variety of learning practices, including discussions, group activities, student presentations, and lectures. Everyone will be expected to have completed reviews of all the required materials (readings, films, websites, etc.) prior to the classroom session. The classroom period will provide opportunities for students to inquiry about readings, films, and other materials and develop a deeper understanding of them through applications to real-life situations, events, and phenomena.

**Course Grading and Requirements**

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<tr>
<th>Course Requirements</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Maximum Points for Each</th>
<th>Total Points Available</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<td>Exams</td>
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<td>Climate Autobiography</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>87 - 89</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 - 79</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 or less</td>
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**Notes on Requirements and Grading**

- Classroom attendance is required and will be graded. Students are responsible for all information, materials, and instructions disseminated during the class period. The lectures, classroom exercises and discussions, and readings will be complimentary but often quite different in content and the exams will reflect this. Since we meet only once a week, a passing grade will be impossible without consistent attendance.
- In addition to the readings, there will be required and recommended multimedia material posted on CANVAS, including learning modules based on films.
- Exams are comprised of a variety of formats, including forced-choice (e.g. multiple choice, true/false) and essay questions. The second exam is not comprehensive.
• This is primarily a discussion course, rather than a lecture course. Engagement means being present in the classroom and prepared to participate. Engagement can be demonstrated by speaking out during class with questions, answers, or comments, by being an active leader in our periodic discussion groups, by bringing to the attention of the class relevant items on culture and climate, and by bringing questions and ideas to me outside classroom hours. In short there are many ways to engage and no two people will do so in the same way.

• The climate autobiography will provide you with the opportunity to reflect on how climate has shaped you and your family’s histories and how it might shape your future life choices. Depending on individual contexts, this might involve stories of past displacements from extreme weather events (e.g., many families never returned to New Orleans after Hurricane Katina or Houston after Hurricane Harvey) or something more mundane (e.g., a desire to avoid snow or to experience strong seasonal changes).

• Together we will build and share an annotated bibliography/filmography/discography of cultural media related to climate (e.g. novels, feature films, visual art, songs, cultural events, etc.). Each student will contribute at least 5 items from at least 2 categories of the visual, literary, and performing arts. This will be a semester-long project that we will discuss and share in class.

• In the spirit of participatory learning, everyone will propose 5 multiple choice questions and 2 essay questions for each of the 2 exams.

• Many of the readings will be posted on CANVAS. I strongly recommend that you print them out. Digital technology is great for some things, but not for learning and retention. You will do best by having the physical texts in your hands, underlying it, and making marginal notes.

**Extra Credit Opportunities**

These will be announced on an ad hoc basis. They will include such things as attending a talk on campus, viewing a relevant film in theaters, or listening to a podcast and then turning in a brief synopsis.

**Keeping Current on Climate Change and Culture**

As part of the participation grade, students will bring to class a news article, video, podcast, blog, or similar mass media source relevant to the region and topic at hand. To facilitate this, please do the following.

- Register to access the *New York Times* for free through [AccessNYT.com](http://AccessNYT.com). Then sign up for the NYT’s “Climate Fwd.”
- Sign up to Yale University’s “Climate Connection” service at [www.yaleclimateconnections.org](http://www.yaleclimateconnections.org)
- Regularly peruse these and similar websites for relevant articles, videos, podcasts, websites, etc. on climate and culture.

**Missed Class and Make-Up Policy**

Absolutely NO make-up exams without either 1) a note from a doctor that you were incapable of attending for medical reasons or 2) documentation of a death in the immediate family. Flat tires,
runaway cats, bad haircuts, etc. **are not valid reasons for missing an exam** and do not qualify for make ups. If you are traveling for a valid reason, either work related or school related, you may be eligible to take the exam early. I will evaluate requests to take the exam prior to travel on a case by case basis. Documentation of the need to travel must be presented to me two weeks in advance of the scheduled exam.

**Academic Misconduct Statement**

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Academic Misconduct includes: **Cheating** – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. **Plagiarism** – The use and appropriation of another’s work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student’s own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism. In this course, cheating and plagiarism **will result in zero credit for the assignment and a report of misconduct filed** with the university.

Learn more about the academic integrity policies and procedures, as well as student resources, that can help you prepare for a successful semester.

**Required Books**

1. Hulme, *Weathered: Cultures of Climate*
2. Grossman and Parker, *Asserting Native Resilience*
3. Ward, *Salvage the Bones*
4. Raygorodetsky, *Archipelago of Hope*

**SCHEDULE (subject to change with prior notice)**

**Important Dates**

- First Exam: October 17
- Last Day to Drop with a DR Grade: November 4
- Second Exam: December 5

**Part I: How are indigenous cultures affected by and responding to climate change?**

Week 1 (August 29) through Week 7 (October 10)
Topics:
• Introduction to cultural geography and climate change
• Indigenous cultures: effects of and responses to climate change

Readings:
• Hulme, chapters 1-4
• Grossman and Parker, pages 1-37, 43-46, 53-97, 125-153, 161-174
• Raygorodetsky, chapters 1-4, 7-8
• Various readings posted on CANVAS

**Part II: How does culture influence perceptions of climate change?**

Week 8 (October 17) through Week 11 (November 7)

Topics:
• Political culture and climate change
• Sense of place and climate change
• Religion and climate change

Readings:
• Hulme, chapters 5-8, 11-12
• Various readings posted on CANVAS

**Part III: How does climate change affect cultures of food production and consumption?**

Week 12 (November 14) through Week 13 (November 21)

Topics:
• Current and projected impacts of climate change on agriculture
• Changes in food consumption in relations to climate change

Readings:
• Various readings posted on CANVAS

**Part IV: How are climate and global warming reflected in visual and performing arts?**

Week 14 (November 28) through Week 15 (December 5)

Topics:
• Climate Change in Literature
• Climate Change in Visual Arts

Readings:
• Ward, *Salvage the Bones*
• Various readings posted on CANVAS