

# Philosophy and climate change

## Moving from eco-anxiety to climate resilience

Ph 390 Spring 2024 MTh 10-11:20 (in person)

This course outline is © Thomas Heyd



Instructor: Thomas Heyd, Ph.D.  
Lectures: Mon/Thu 10:00-11:20 pm  
Delivery mode: In person  
Classroom: Clearihue 110  
Office hours: Mon/Thu 11:30-12:20 pm  
e-mail: [heydt@uvic.ca](mailto:heydt@uvic.ca)

**Provisional outline:** there may be some changes to this outline.

### Course description

In this course we address [how to live and learn with human-caused climate change](#). Among other things, we explore:

- climate anxiety and its consequences, especially for younger people,
- the deeper cultural causes of anthropogenic climate change,
- climate justice, including for future generations, women, Indigenous people, and marginalised populations, and
- human and nature's rights

Key questions that may be considered:

- How does philosophy contribute to climate action?
- How did climate change in the past and how did it change humans?
- How to live with climate grief?
- How is community resilience and how can politics respond to climate change?
- What does it mean to live in the deep time of the Anthropocene?
- How can Indigenous ways of inhabiting the land contribute to climate resilience?
- What are human rights in the times of climate change?
- Can a contract with nature address climate change?
- How to appreciate the beauty of nature in climate change?
- How does climate change affect Indigenous rights?

While our approach to these questions will be grounded in philosophical practice, we will draw on resources from other disciplines, such as geography, environmental studies, climate science, and ecopsychology. Guest speakers will be invited.

Students from all disciplines are welcome. There are no prerequisites, though previous philosophy courses or in climate-related social or environmental sciences (such as geography or ecopsychology) will be an asset. Active participation by students in class discussion will be encouraged. A class presentation, after group work and visits to selected sites, will be expected. Class presentations can be used for the elaboration of the final course paper.

Grades will be based on regular participation (10%), brief reaction pieces (20%), a short presentation of group work (30%), and a final course paper (40%).

### Grading scale and interpretation

Percentages will convert to a letter grade according to the standard University scheme:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 65-69	D = 50-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 60-64	F = 0-49
A- = 80-84	B- = 70-72		

#### *What the Grading Scale Means:*

- A+, A, or A-** Earned by work that is technically superior, shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.
- B+, B, or B-** Earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.
- C+ or C** Earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.
- D** Earned by work that indicates minimal command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.
- F** Work that is not worthy of course credit toward the degree.
- N** An N grade indicates that the student did not complete one or more of the course's essential requirements. In this course that means that a student has not completed the Final take-home exam or the Mid-term test or the Experiential project. "N" is a failing grade and factors into the student's GPA as "0".

Interpretation of these grade definitions is up to the discretion of the instructor. If you receive a grade during the course that you believe is in error or unfair, please begin by discussing the matter with the instructor in a respectful, open-minded manner. Rest assured that if you still believe the grade that you received is in error or unfair you can appeal the matter to the chair of the department. For additional information regarding grades, please see the most recent edition of the *UVic Undergraduate Calendar*. All evaluations will be given in percentage scores. Letter grades and grade point scores are listed purely for reference.

All evaluations of assignments, presentations and final papers will be calculated according to *percentage scores*. Letter grades and grade point scores are listed purely for reference. The final course grade will be calculated according to the percentages indicated above. However, this will not be done automatically on Brightspace, so ignore the 'Grades' section on Brightspace.

## **Other matters**

### *Late assignments and papers*

Late weekly assignments and late papers are only acceptable with documented medical reasons or personal crisis, which should be submitted with an explanatory statement in writing no more than three days after the deadline.

### *Academic integrity and University academic regulations*

The University Calendar states that “Academic integrity requires commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility... Any action that contravenes this standard, including misrepresentation, falsification or deception, undermines the intention and worth of scholarly work and violates the fundamental academic rights of members of our community.” All students in my course are asked to complete the Integrity Matters module that is available in Brightspace ([here](#)) before you hand in *any* coursework for evaluation. Students need to self-enrol in this module by searching for it under the Discovery tab (drop-down menu) on the Brightspace homepage.

Violations of academic integrity include plagiarism, multiple submissions, falsifying materials subject to academic evaluation, cheating on work, tests and examinations, unauthorized use of an editor, and aiding others to cheat. To avoid plagiarism and cheating please view the Libraries’ plagiarism guide <https://www.uvic.ca/library/research/citation/plagiarism/>. I reserve the right to use plagiarism detection software or other platforms to assess the integrity of student work.

Penalties for violations vary, with first violations generally resulting in a failing grade on the work. Please view [https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/index.php#/policy/Sk\\_0xsM\\_V?bc=true&bcCurrent=08%20-%20Policy%20on%20Academic%20Integrity&bcGroup=Undergraduate%20Academic%20Regulations&bcltemType=policies](https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/index.php#/policy/Sk_0xsM_V?bc=true&bcCurrent=08%20-%20Policy%20on%20Academic%20Integrity&bcGroup=Undergraduate%20Academic%20Regulations&bcltemType=policies). Also, please familiarise yourselves with Undergraduate Academic regulations here: <https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/future/undergrad/index.php#/policies>.

### *Copyright statement*

All course content and materials are made available by the instructor for educational purposes and for the exclusive use of students registered in their class. This includes all lecture notes, exams and quizzes that I make available to you. The material is protected under copyright law, even if not marked with ©. Any further use or distribution of materials to others requires the written permission of the instructor, except under fair dealing or another exception in the Copyright Act. Violations may result in disciplinary action under the Resolution of Non-Academic Misconduct Allegations policy (AC1300). Any evidence you are circulating materials without permission will be referred to the Chair of the Philosophy Department for investigation.

### *Inclusivity/diversity*

The Philosophy Department is committed to providing an environment for all students, staff, and faculty that is safe, inclusive, and respectful. We affirm the diverse identities of persons and the rights all individuals have to be treated with dignity and respect irrespective of their gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, class, or national origin. This basic commitment entails, among other things, specific recognition and support for trans, queer, two-spirited, and non-binary people, and we respect individuals’ rights to self-determination and self-description. Information about UVic policies on human rights, equity, discrimination and harassment are available at [www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/index.php#/policy/HkQQpzdAN](http://www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/index.php#/policy/HkQQpzdAN). If you have any particular concerns about these matters in our course please don’t hesitate to contact me. Information regarding accommodation of religious observance can be located in the UVic Calendar at <https://www.uvic.ca/equity/education/religious/index.php>. Any student who has a need for religious accommodation during this course, please contact the instructor at the earliest point in time in the semester.

### *Student Mental Health Supports / UVic Support Connect*

Many, if not most, students experience some difficulties with their mental health during their years as students. This may especially be the case during the present Covid-19 times. It is hard to shake the stigma associated with problems like depression and anxiety, however, if at any point you believe that you could benefit from help with mental health issues, please contact the UVic Student Wellness Centre / UVic Support Connect. In addition to providing face to face help, they offer a 24 x 7 phone & online mental health counselling and support program, no matter where you are located, at any time. This is an excellent resource at your disposal on campus. They genuinely want to help, so *do consider taking advantage of this free resource.*

### *Health Services and Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL)*

A note to remind you to take care of yourself, especially in these times. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. The sooner you let any of these on-campus services know your needs the quicker they can assist you in achieving your learning goals. Resources include

- Counselling Services, at the Student Wellness Centre. See <https://www.uvic.ca/services/counselling/>.
- University Health Services (UHS) provides a full-service primary health clinic for students and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives. <http://www.uvic.ca/services/health/>
- Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Center for Accessible Learning (CAL) as soon as possible. CAL staff members are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations: <https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/>. Please note that instructors cannot provide CAL-type accommodations without CAL documentation.

### *Important dates and academic advising*

Important dates for the 2023-2024 Academic Year are found here: <https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/dates/>. Please consult the Important Dates for information about last possible dates to withdraw from courses without penalty, examinations period start/end dates, etc. For information about declaring a program, academic concessions or interpreting your UVic CAPP report, please visit Undergraduate Advising or make an appointment with an advisor.

### *Schedule of lectures, assignments and readings*

The schedule of lectures, assignments and readings will be made available in advance of the start of the Spring Semester (January 2024). Both required and optional recommended readings will be found on the Brightspace website.