

## GEOG 4450F – Climate Change and Collective Action Course Outline: Fall 2023

### 1. Course Information

\*Details about design and delivery of the course are listed below in Section 6



Classes Start	Fall Reading Week	Classes End	Study day(s)	Exam Period
September 7	Oct 30 – Nov 3	December 8	December 9	December 10-22

September 15, 2023: Last day to add a second-term half course

September 27, 2023: Optional field trip to March for the Land in Queen's Park, Toronto

October 9, 2023: Thanksgiving Holiday

November 13, 2023: Last day to drop a first term half course without penalty



Course Instructor	Contact Information	Office Hours
<b>Cortney K. Golkar-Dakin</b> (S. Awasis)	cdakin2@uwo.ca	Thurs 1:30-2:30pm or by appointment



- Office hours will be held in person or remotely via Zoom (on request)
- Students will be able to sign up for scheduled office hours using Sign Up on OWL
- Students can make an appointment to meet by emailing cdakin2@uwo.ca
- Students will be able to drop into office hours as a group
- A summary of the discussion that takes place in group office hours will be posted on OWL for everyone to view

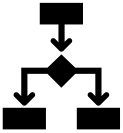
### Calendar Description

Explores the role of collective action in addressing the climate crisis. Examines theories of the state, civil society and social change, and historic and ongoing tactics of social and environmental movements. Urges shifting the focus of action from “what can I do?” toward “what can we do?”

[2 lecture hours, 1 tutorial hour, 0.5 course]

## 2. Extended Description

The course explores how a variety of strategies to push for social change can inform efforts to address the climate crisis. We begin by reviewing the challenge of achieving a just transition and considering how the scale and urgency of this task – deeply rooted in capitalist and colonial power structures – transcends the level of individual lifestyle choices. Deep decarbonization and climate justice perspectives will be compared. Theories of democracy set the stage for exploring the potential and limits of working within, against, and outside existing institutions. Student presentations will profile the tactics and achievements of historical and ongoing social movements focused on the environment, independence struggles, labour issues, anti-discrimination, and more. Students will spend the tutorials planning and carrying out a climate change action as a group, using one of the strategies studied in class. This could involve preparing a delegation to meet with a politician, running a public education campaign, lobbying the university to take a specific action, or organizing an event alongside one of London’s existing community organizations, among other possibilities.



### Prerequisites

Third or fourth year status at the University and at least two of the following: [Geography 1200A/B](#), [Geography 2133A/B](#), [Geography 3350A/B](#), [Geography 3443F/G](#), [Geography 3446F/G](#), or permission of the instructor.

Prerequisite checking is the student’s responsibility. Senate Regulations state, “unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.”

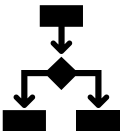
## 3. Readings



All resources will be posted on OWL: <http://owl.uwo.ca> and any changes will be discussed with the class and posted as an announcement on OWL. In addition to required readings/viewings, each week additional resources are provided. While these are not mandatory, they are recommended to extend and enrich our discussion of the topic of the week.

## 4. Format

- With the exception of illness, bereavement, and religious observances, attendance and participation is required in this small, in-person, interactive course.
- Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures as well as assigned readings and films.
- [Google Chrome](#) or [Mozilla Firefox](#) are the preferred browsers to optimally use OWL; update your browsers frequently. To evaluate your internet speed, click [here](#).
- For assistance, students can seek support on the [OWL Help page](#). Alternatively, contact the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#) (phone: 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800).



## 5. Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze how capitalism and colonialism intersect with climate change and climate action
- Discuss how theories of democracy inform efforts for social change
- Explain the rationale behind a variety of tactics for collective action, using historical and contemporary examples
- Articulate a personal position on whether and under what conditions various tactics can be justified
- Demonstrate the intellectual, logistical and interpersonal skills needed to plan and execute a collective action on climate change
- Express compelling and well-supported arguments, orally and in writing



## 6. Course Content and Schedule

Week	Dates	Topic	Readings/Viewings
1	Sept 7 (tutorial)	Course overview	Guardian 2022
2	Sept 12 (lecture) Sept 14 (tutorial)	System change I: Capitalism	Lewis 2015 Monbiot 2019
3	Sept 19 (lecture) Sept 21 (tutorial)	System change II: Colonialism	Coulthard 2013 LaDuke & Cowen 2020
4	Sept 26 (lecture) Sept 28 (tutorial)	Big ideas I: Decarbonization and Climate justice	Jaccard 2020 Ch.13 Timperley 2021
5	Oct 3 (lecture) Oct 5 (tutorial)	Big ideas II: Democracy, freedom, and responsibility	Astra 2018 D'Arcy 2013 Ch.3
6	Oct 10 (lecture) Oct 12 (tutorial)	Working within I: Politics and policies	Routledge et al. 2018 Salamanca et al. 2022
7	Oct 17 (lecture) Oct 19 (tutorial)	Working within II: Divestment	D'Arcy 2014 Whelan, Sheerin & Rice 2016
8	Oct 24 (lecture) Oct 26 (tutorial)	Direct action I: Blockades	Simpson 2020 McCreary 2020
9	Oct 30 – Nov 3	Reading Week	N/A
10	Nov 7 (lecture) Nov 9 (tutorial)	Direct action II: Sabotage	Malm 2021 D'Arcy 2013 Ch.6
11	Nov 14 (lecture) Nov 16 (tutorial)	Prefigurative politics I: Being the change	Yates 2015
12	Nov 21 (lecture) Nov 23 (tutorial)	Prefigurative politics II: Black and Indigenous futurity	Gergan & Curley 2023 Barnes 2021
13	Nov 28 (lecture) Nov 30 (tutorial)	Swimming upstream I: Grief and frustration	Mckay 2021 Monbiot 2022
14	Dec 5 (lecture) Dec 7 (tutorial)	Swimming upstream II: Hope and progress	Astra 2021



## 7. Communication



- Updates will be provided using OWL announcements. Please opt in to receiving OWL announcements by email.
- Students are responsible for checking their **UWO email account** in a timely manner. You can read about the privacy and security of the UWO email accounts [here](#).
- Instructors email will be checked daily and students can expect to receive a response in 24 – 48 hours.
- This course will use the OWL forums for discussion and students are encouraged to post course-related questions and content to the discussion forum so that it accessible for everyone to view.

## 8. Evaluation

Below is the evaluation breakdown for the course. Any changes will be communicated. More detailed instructions for assignments will be provided separately. The evaluation methods described below, include the oral exam, are essential to meeting the learning objectives of the course.

Assessment	Weighting	Due Date(s)
Reflection papers (4x5%)	20%	Sept 26 Oct 10 * Oct 24 Nov 14 Nov 28
In-class presentation	20%	Various
Collective action: group plan	10%	Oct 5
Collective action: group report	20%	Dec 5
Oral exam	30%	December exam period



\* The October 10<sup>th</sup> reflection is optional and based on the Sept 27<sup>th</sup> field trip. If you attend the March for the Land and submit 5 reflection papers total, your best 4/5 grades will be recorded.

### Submission and late policy

- All assignments are due before lecture/tutorial at 12:30pm EST unless otherwise specified.
- Assignments should be submitted through OWL, on or before the due date.
- Written assignments will be submitted to Turnitin via OWL (statement in policies below).
- Students will have unlimited submissions to Turnitin up to the due date.
- Late assessments without accommodation (see Section 9 below) will be subject to a late penalty of 5%/day.

- An assessment cannot be submitted after it has been returned to the class; instead an alternate assessment will be assigned.
- A make-up presentation date will be arranged if needed.
- After an assessment is returned, students should wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting the instructor; to ensure a timely response, reach out within 7 days of receiving feedback.

**Grading**

Click [here](#) for a detailed and comprehensive set of policies and regulations concerning grading. The table below outlines the University-wide grade descriptors.

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

**Grades will not be adjusted on the basis of want or need. It is important to monitor your performance in the course. Remember: *You* are responsible for your grades in this course.**

**9. Accommodation Policies**

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

**Academic Consideration for Student Absence**

The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student’s overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities. Where medical documentation is required, the student must submit it directly to the appropriate Faculty Dean’s office. A student seeking accommodation for work worth less than 10% does not need to provide medical documentation, but must contact the instructor.

[Policy on Academic Consideration for Medical Illness - Undergraduate Students](#)

[Student Medical Certificate \(SMC\)](#)

## Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#). Indigenous students with ceremonial commitments should contact the instructor.

### 10. Make-up Examinations

Makeups will be granted with approved documentation only. All documentation for missed exams must be provided to the Academic Counselling Office within 48 hours of the scheduled exam, otherwise the instructor will assign a grade of zero.

The format and content of make-ups may differ substantially from the scheduled examination.

### 11. Use of Electronic Devices

No electronic devices will be allowed during oral examinations. The instructor encourages a laptop-free classroom environment during guest lectures and student presentations.

### 12. How to Be Successful in this Class:

Students enrolled in this class should understand the level of autonomy and self-discipline required to be successful.

1. Invest in a planner or application to keep track of your courses. Populate all your deadlines at the start of the term and schedule time at the start of each week to get organized and manage your time.
2. Make it a daily habit to log onto OWL to ensure you have seen everything posted to help you succeed in this class.
3. Take notes as you go through the lesson material. Keeping handwritten notes or even notes on a regular Word document will help you learn more effectively.
4. Connect with others. Try forming a study group and try meeting on a weekly basis for study and peer support.
5. Do not be afraid to ask questions. If you are struggling with a topic, check the online discussion boards, contact your instructor, or attend office hours.
6. Reward yourself for successes. It seems easier to motivate ourselves knowing that there is something waiting for us at the end of the task.



### 13. Continuity of Education Plan (in-person class pivoting to online learning)

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the university to direct courses move away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online and/or at home as determined by the course instructor.

## **14. Information on COVID-19**

### **Course Absences due to Daily COVID Screening Questionnaire**

Missed assessments (e.g., presentations, reflections, exams etc.) require formal academic considerations (see section 9). Students who demonstrate a pattern of routinely missing coursework due to self-reported COVID symptoms, and therefore do not demonstrate mastery of the learning outcomes of the course, will not receive credit for the course.

## **15. Academic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com ( <http://www.turnitin.com> ).

## **16. Western's Commitment to Accessibility**

The Department of Geography and Environment strives at all times to provide accessibility to all faculty, staff, students and visitors in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519-661-2147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website.

More information about "Accessibility at Western" is available.

## **17. Mental Health**

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit Western's Health and Wellness website for more information on mental health resources.

## **18. Support Services**

Western's Support Services  
Student Development Centre

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html).

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

## **19. Important Dates**

September 7: Classes resume

September 15: Last day to add a first term half course

September 27: Optional Field Trip to March for the Land in Queen's Park, Toronto

October 9: Thanksgiving Holiday – Department Office Closed

October 30 to Nov 3: Fall Study Break (No classes; Department Office open)

November 13: Last day to drop a first term half course without penalty

November 30: Last day to drop a full course without penalty

December 8: Classes end

December 9: Study day

December 10-22: Examination Period