

Economics 496 Writing Intensive & Contemporary Ethical Issues

The Economics of Climate Change in Hawai'i

Classroom

Spring 2009

Room: George 213

Time Monday, Wednesday 10:30-11:45 am

Professors

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Introduction

This course explores economic and ethical issues underlying the threat of global climate change. Students will develop a climate change platform for Hawai'i based on an analysis of economic and ethical impacts. The course will cover the nature and causes of global climate change and economic solutions. Topics include intertemporal valuation of climate change impacts, energy and resource linkages, mitigation solutions, societal adaptation, and international cooperation.

The course will emphasize Hawai'i's unique conditions. In addition to lectures, a number of guest speakers from the community will discuss with students global climate change as it directly affects the state of Hawaii. Students will complete several short written assignments, designed to culminate in a final assignment, which is to formulate a global climate change policy for the State of Hawaii. The final assignment will consist of three parts: a speech to be given by the Governor, a White Paper to be presented to the State Legislature as well as agencies on the state and county level; and a press release/talking points, which will outline in slightly greater detail the substance behind the governor's speech. Students will work collaboratively as well as independently.

Prerequisites

This course welcomes students with a broad range of backgrounds. A *Principles of Economics* course (ECON 120, 130, or 131) is prerequisite for this course.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will learn how to apply economic and ethical reasoning to the inquiry of human dimensions of global climate change. By proposing a platform for Hawai'i policy, students will attain acquire powerful tools and methodologies for addressing the economic ethical and scientific dilemmas surrounding global climate change that will impact humanity for generations to come.

Students will learn the basic terminology of global climate change, scientific concepts, economic policy options, environmental economics, energy economics, and ethics, and strengthen their understanding of key microeconomic concepts.

Students will be able to apply economic theories of intertemporal equity to the generational choices involved with global climate change policy.

Students will understand alternative ways to model the shadow price, or marginal abatement costs, of greenhouse gas emissions and mechanisms available for building new emissions markets in practice.

Students will be able to model environmental externalities to the problem of mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Students will identify economic and environmental issues involved in energy, and the transition to alternative backstop renewable technologies.

Students will advance written and oral communication skills, and develop team management expertise to advance original research and analysis for Hawai'i.

Students will practice using ethically- and economically- valid frameworks for reaching decisions about controversial economic-based issues surrounding global climate change.

Students will learn about organizations, businesses, government agencies, and individuals, internationally and within the community, who are involved in the global climate change debate as well as learn to identify those groups that may be affected by proposed solutions to this dilemma.

Textbook

The required textbooks for this class are:

D.G. Victor, 2004. *Climate Change: Debating America's Policy Options*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations.

N. Stern, 2007. *The Economics of Climate Change: The Stern Review*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Additional readings as required will be provided in electronic format online in the resource folder at the <http://laulima.hawaii.edu/portal> site for this course. The provisional reading list is the beginning of development of a set of resources on this topic. We invite students to help us fill this in over the course of the semester.

What makes this a Contemporary Ethical Issues (E) class?

Contemporary ethical issues are fully integrated into the main course material and will constitute at least 30% of the course content. At least 8 hours of class time will be spent discussing ethical issues. Through the use of lectures, discussions and assignments, students will develop basic competency in recognizing and analyzing ethical issues; how to responsibly deliberate on ethical issues; and making ethically determined judgments.

Ethical issues to be discussed in this class include, but are not limited to, the following: Recognizing global climate change as an ethical issue; ethics and the discount rate; ethical reasoning; ethics and decision-making; environmental ethics; business ethics; ethical theories; distributive justice; moral considerability.

What makes this a Writing Intensive (WI) class?

Writing will be used in this course as a means of learning course material. Since much of the course material is contained in the required texts, students will not be able to respond intelligently and creatively to assignments without devoting time to careful reading, which means this course also is a *reading intensive* courses. Reading entails learning and familiarizing oneself with the terminology used in the texts and working to follow the line of reasoning presented. Depending on how advanced a student you are you should reserve 3-4 hours a week for reading and digesting course materials, in addition to the time it takes for you to meet with your group and complete your written assignments.

Assessment

1) Regular attendance and active individual participation (20%)

This grade includes in-class individual and group presentations and discussions. The grade does not include any of the three components of the final project. This grade does include completing presentation rubric forms as well as completing two peer evaluation forms: one in Week 7 and one at the end of the semester.

2) Papers (60%)

There will be three short written assignments as well as a final project, which will be graded separately. Students will receive an individual grade for each written assignment, even those that are designated as group papers. The assignments are as follows:

Due Week 3: Written Assignment 1 – Laying the Groundwork – Individual Paper

Write a three to five page paper setting out your understanding of and position on global climate change, including the supporting science. Be prepared to discuss and defend your understanding of the problem with your classmates. Remember, your position need not be that of your professors, however, you must have support for your position, whatever it may be.

Due Week 7: Written Assignment 2 – Understanding the Implications – Group Paper

Write a five to seven page paper setting out your groups understanding and position on how (and why) economics and ethics are implicated in a discussion on global climate change. Additional instructions and suggestions on how to divide the work among group members will be provided. Be prepared to discuss and defend your understanding of the problem with your classmates.

Due Week 14: Written Assignment 3 – Justifying Decisions – Group Paper

By this time, your group should be arriving at ideas on proposed solutions to the problem of global climate change as it affects Hawaii. Write a five to seven page paper setting out one or two of your group's suggested solutions. Your group does not have to be committed to the solution. For each suggested solution, present an ethical justification. Make sure to include the concepts discussed in the readings on distributive justice. Additional instructions and suggestions on how to divide the work among group members will be provided.

3) Final Project – Group Grade (20%)

The Final assignment will be presented to the class on May 4 and May 6 and must be turned in on the final exam date. The final assignment consists of creating a policy for the State of Hawaii on global climate change. The policy will be presented in three forms: a twenty to thirty minute speech to be given by the Governor of the state; a fifteen to twenty page White Paper to be distributed to state and county agencies; and a one to two page press-release/talking points to be sent to the press state-wide. Additional information regarding the final assignment will be presented in class. However, each of the shorter written paper assignments is designed to aid the group in formulating its policy and in writing its final speech, White Paper, and press release. The final assignments will take the place of a midterm and a final exam.

Policy on late submissions and rewrites including any penalties for late work.

Failure to deliver any assignment on time will entail a grade deduction. Assignments not submitted within one week from the due date are considered failed performances. Re-writes are encouraged. They need to be turned in no later than one week after the instructor returned the original paper. Students needing additional assistance with their writing are encouraged to contact the Writing Workshop, which offers free consultation. Students should call the English department (956-7619) to make an appointment.

Policy on style and on e-mail submissions.

All papers need to be paginated. Quotations and sources used are to be referenced. Web sources consulted have to be attached to papers. Book titles and foreign terms are to be italicized. Please, avoid sexist language. For bibliography and footnotes follow instructions in *Chicago Manual of Style*. While students may send their papers as an attachment in order to meet the deadline, they are expected to provide the instructor with a hard copy. *The instructor will not print out any e-mailed papers.*

Policy on plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to submitting, in fulfillment of an academic requirement, any work that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without attributing that borrowed portion to the individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation another's idea and particular phrasing that was not assimilated into the student's language and style or paraphrasing a passage so that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral or artistic material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; or drylabbing, which includes obtaining and using experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of a course or from previous terms. (The University of Hawai'i Student Conduct Code)

Any student who plagiarizes in this course will receive a failing grade and will be referred to the Dean of Students. To keep out of harm's way in this area cite your sources and when you quote use quotation marks.

Disability Statement

If you feel you need reasonable accommodations because of the impact of a disability, please (i) contact the KOKUA Program, room 013, QLCSS, 956-7511 or 956-7612; (ii) speak with one of us privately to discuss your specific needs. We will be happy to work with you and the KOKUA Program to meet your access needs related to your documented disability.

Detailed Class Schedule

Readings relevant to each week are listed in a separate (496 ReadingList) document. This contains both essential reading and resources for further research on each topic. Instructors will each week indicate what are the essential readings for that week (usually just one or two from the list). Readings for the first few classes are indicated below.

(The Instructors reserve the right to change this schedule if necessary.)

Wk	Month	Date	In-Class Discussion	Assignment	Assign Due
1	January	12	Introduction and Administrative ----- Details: Discuss assignments; Form groups and explain market trading rules for group member trades	Read pp 1-75 in CC Read Framework for Universal Principles of Ethics (http://www.ethics.ubc.ca/papers/invited/colero.html)	1/14
		14	Market is open! Trading topic assignments ----- Ethics: Recognizing global climate change as an ethical and policy issue	Read assigned speech in CC and prepare for in-class discussion	1/21
		15	Special Event 10:00 am to noon: Legislative Hearing: Hawai'i and Climate Change. Hawai'i State Capitol Building Senator Gabbard and Representative Morita		
2		19	Holiday – Martin Luther King		
		21	In-Class Discussion: presentation of CC speech, defense, and critique -----	Begin Paper 1(individual) Laying the groundwork. Read Stern, Ch 1-2	2/2

Wk	Month	Date	In-Class Discussion	Assignment	Assign Due
			1. Making a Market 2. Innovation and Adaptation		1/26
3		26	In-Class Discussion: 3. International Cooperation ----- Konan: Hawai'i GHG Profile	Read Broome www.SciAm.com Nordhaus	1/28
		28	Guest Lecturer: Prof. Nori Tarui – Climate Change Mitigation		
4	February	2	Written Assignment 1 Due and In- Class Group Discussion		
		4	Climate as a Public Good ----- Ethics: Climate Change Ethics and Utilitarianism		
5		9	Guest Lecturer: Prof. Chip Fletcher Sea Level Rise in Hawaii		
		11	Economics: Public Economics and Climate Change	Written assignment 2 (group) should be under way	2/25
6		16	Holiday: President's Day		
		18	Guest Lecturer: David Karl Hungry Oceans		
		23	Environmental Ethics		
		25	10:30 – 11:15: Group Work		

Wk	Month	Date	In-Class Discussion	Assignment	Assign Due
7			Ethics: Justice, Welfare, and Policy		
8	March	2	Written Assignment 2 Due; 1st Peer Evaluation Due Economics: Welfare, Externalities, and Public Goods		
		4	Public Economics: Pigouvian taxes and other policy options		
9		9	Public Economics: Efficiency—equity tradeoff in climate policy		
		11	Guest Speaker: Terry Surles on Future Technologies	Brainstorm to Fill in the gaps – oral presentation	4/1
10		16	Group feedback and discussion session		
		18	Guest Lecture: Craig Coleman: Greenhouse Gas Accounting		
		23-27	SPRING BREAK		
11		30	Guest Speaker: Nori Tarui <i>International Trade and Climate Change</i> , World Bank 2008		
	April	1	In-Class Discussion: Filling the Gaps		
12		6	Konan: Carbon Intensity of Economic Activity in Hawai'i		
		8	Tiles: Waxman and Federal issues	Begin write up for assignment 3	4/22

Wk	Month	Date	In-Class Discussion	Assignment	Assign Due
13		13	Holger Klier: Carbon Trading in Europe		
		15	Economics: International Trade and Global Climate Change		
14		20	Economics: International Trade (cont.)		
			Ethics: Fairness		
		22	Written Assignment 3 Due and In-Class Discussion		
15		27	Guest Speaker: Robbie Alm – VP HECO		
		29	Guest Speaker: Gerard Fryer, Pacific Tsunami Warning Center on Press Releases Open Discussion – Group Work		
16	May	4	Final Presentations – In Class		
		6	Final Presentations – In Class		