

Topics in Anthropology: Climate Change & Human Health ANTH 4040 / ANTH 5040 / HLTH 4000

Time: T 2:30 pm – 3:45 pm, asynchronous activities to be completed outside of class

Location: Fretwell 419



Instructor: Dr. Lydia E. O. Light

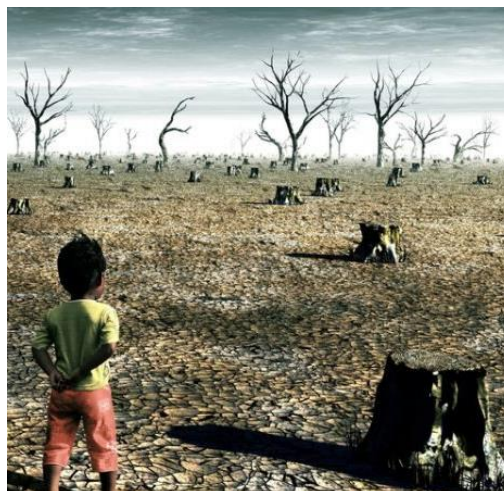
Office: Barnard 215

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Office Hours: W 11:00 am - 1:00 pm and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

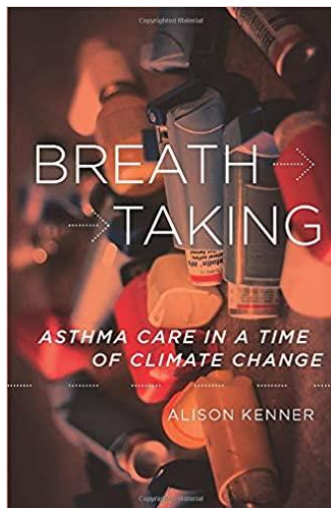
This course will examine the effects of global climate change on human health from an anthropological perspective. We will begin with an overview of climate science, including the processes involved in global weather patterns and the various factors contributing to current climate change. We will then explore ways in which global climate change is impacting human health at local and global scales, including access to water, changing settlement patterns, nutrition, environmental pollutants, disease transfer, human displacement, interpersonal conflict, and global sociopolitical issues. Throughout the course, we will address fundamental anthropological questions related to cultural practices, past societies, and the interaction between power, resistance, and agency.



****Statement on Social Justice: As anthropologists, we are committed to making the world safe for human differences, and to serving students of all identities and from all backgrounds. As a part of that, this class is explicitly anti-racist. I will not tolerate racist and discriminatory language and beliefs.

****Statement on Gender Equality: This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If the name listed on the class roster is incorrect, please let me know. Please correct me on your gender pronoun if I make a mistake. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:



Breathtaking: Asthma Care in a Time of Climate Change

2018

By Alison Kenner

ISBN-13: 978-1517902872

(can be rented/purchased as **either hard copy or e-book**)

The Teacher-Friendly Guide to Climate Change

2017

By Ingrid H.H. Zebell, Don Duggan-Haas, and Robert M. Moss

ISBN-13: 978-0877105190

(This entire e-text is provided on Canvas for FREE)

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:

My approach to teaching focuses on the power of experiential knowledge. Therefore, I include as many opportunities for my students to emotionally engage with the material presented. While certain aspects of the course are most effectively taught through traditional lectures, this class will rely heavily on student-driven class discussion. I also feel that students in my courses should be gaining skills that apply to other courses and professionalism in general.

COURSE UNITS:

Unit One: We will begin the semester reading an ethnography that examines lived experiences of living with asthma and how climate change is impacting human health and well-being in relation to disordered breathing. This book will provide you with a clear understanding of the way in which anthropologists conduct research and articulate their findings.

Unit Two: This unit will provide students with an overview of current climate science. We will cover general climate processes, documented changes in climate over time, the explanations that have been proposed by scientists for why the climate is currently changing in ways that differ from changes in the past, and why that matters for both social and political reasons.

Unit Three: In this unit, we will examine the effects of global climate change on human health and wellbeing at both local and global scales. We will learn about how past societies coped (or did not) with climate change and how human health continues to be affected by climate change today. We will discuss: access to water, changing settlement patterns, nutrition, environmental pollutants, disease transfer, human displacement, interpersonal conflict, and global sociopolitical issues.

NOTE ON COVID-19 AND MASKS IN THE CLASSROOM

It is the current policy of UNC Charlotte that as a condition of on-campus enrollment, all students are required to engage in safe behaviors to avoid the spread of COVID-19 in the 49er community. Such behaviors specifically include the requirement that all of you properly wear CDC-compliant face coverings in all indoor spaces on campus, including classrooms and labs, regardless of

vaccination status. Failure to comply with this policy in the classroom may result in dismissal from the current class session. If a student refuses to leave the classroom after being dismissed, I will refer them to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity for charges under the Code of Student Responsibility.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

You are expected to **take responsibility for your learning** in this course. This includes attending class meetings, completing assigned readings, participating in small group and class discussions, turning in all assignments on time, and keeping up to date on all information presented via Canvas. Please visit me during my office hours for assistance. Unanticipated factors such as time constraints and accessibility of reading material may influence the planned topics and schedule. All course content and schedule changes will be announced as far in advance as is feasible.

EXAM: There will be **one exam** at the conclusion of the second unit. This exam will cover the existing scientific data related to global climate change.

READING SUMMARIES: Frequent, lengthy readings will be required for this course. Brief reading summaries need to be completed and uploaded to Canvas prior to class on the date the reading is listed on the syllabus.

SMALL GROUP MEETINGS: For the hybrid portion of this class, you will need to find a time to meet with a group of other students in the class to discuss the weekly meetings and prepare for seminar before our Tuesday class meetings. During your small group meetings, you will identify themes in the assigned readings and compile a list of discussion points for the following Tuesday's class.

VIDEO RESPONSES: Throughout the semester, I will be assigning videos that help clarify or expand on topics covered in class. We will discuss the videos in class and you will be asked to submit a video response paper **prior to the beginning of the next class**. Instructions for completing the video response papers will be posted on Canvas.

PROJECT: You will be asked to summarize your learning by completing an unessay assignment in lieu of a final exam. These projects should aim to convince a chosen audience to invest in climate change mitigation strategies as a means of addressing human health concerns. You will present these projects to the class during the final exam period.

SELF-ASSESSMENT AND PARTICIPATION: Self-assessments and participation will be evaluated twice during the term. You will be asked to schedule a video conference with me to discuss your performance in the course. Participation will be evaluated based on quality, not quantity; students may be penalized for either under- or over-participating (monopolizing the conversation, being disruptive, or disrespecting classmates or the instructor) in class discussions.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is expected, as this is a seminar-style course. Excessive absences will be considered during final grading. If you have to miss class for a university-approved reason, please contact me beforehand or within 24 hours of missing class (or within 24 hours of being capable of contacting me). If you need to miss class as a result of a COVID-19 diagnosis or quarantine, I will provide you with an alternative task to complete; however, due to the nature of this seminar-style

course, it is not possible to truly replicate the experience of participating in the class discussion and I will therefore not provide students with video recordings of the class meeting.

GRADING:

This course will be embracing the “ungrading” policy that has been developed recently and popularized by Dr. Jesse Stommel (see <https://www.jessestommel.com/how-to-ungrade/> for a general overview of the history of the movement and <https://www.jessestommel.com/ungrading-an-faq/> for a general overview of the realities of this approach). This **DOES NOT MEAN** that you do not have work to complete for this course. What it does mean is that when you complete an assignment, you will receive full credit and *extensive* feedback and you are expected to read that feedback and implement it for future assignments. Twice during the semester, I will ask you to tell me what grade (A, B, C, D, or F) you think you deserve and to justify that assessment in relation to your performance throughout the course. While I will ultimately be responsible for assigning your final grade, I will rely mostly on your self-assessments.

GRADE DISPUTE POLICIES:

If you feel I have made a grading or recording error with your course grades, you **MUST** contact me to discuss the issue within **2 weeks** of when the grade is posted on Canvas or by the last day of class if during the final two weeks of the semester. Any disputes brought to my attention after that point will not be addressed as you are responsible for monitoring your grades.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:

My classroom is a place where open-minded, independent thinking is encouraged. To facilitate this environment, all students are expected to act with respect and maturity towards their fellow students, the instructor, and any visiting speakers.

I hold the following expectations for my students:

- 1) All cell phones (smart or dumb) and other personal electronics must be **put away before the start of class** and kept out of sight. If you are using a laptop, I ask that you use it **only for taking notes or completing in-class activities**. If you have extenuating circumstances, please contact me.
- 2) To reduce in-class distractions, please **remain seated during class**. If you know you need to leave prior to the end of class, please speak to me before class begins.
- 3) Please save your personal discussions for after class and avoid interrupting classmates.
- 4) Arrive **on-time** for class and refrain from packing up your belongings before the class is finished. While it is reasonable to be late occasionally, habitual tardiness is not acceptable. If you have extenuating circumstances, please contact me.
- 5) Some of the material covered in class may be perceived as controversial. Please remain respectful of your classmates (and instructor) during discussions of such nature. Each of us may have strongly differing opinions on the various topics of class discussions. The orderly questioning of the ideas of others, including mine, is similarly welcome. However, I will exercise my responsibility to manage the discussions so that ideas and argument can proceed in an orderly fashion. You should expect that if your conduct during class discussions seriously disrupts the atmosphere of mutual respect I expect in

this class, you will not be permitted to participate further and may subsequently lose opportunities for course credit.

This syllabus contains the policies and expectations I have established for the Topics in Anthropology: Global Climate Change and Human Health course. Please read the entire syllabus carefully before continuing in this course. These policies and expectations are intended to create a productive learning atmosphere for all students. Unless you are prepared to abide by these policies and expectations, you risk losing the opportunity to participate further in the course.

POLICY ON VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM:

Academia is not structured in a way that is conducive to the multi-faceted lives of our student body here at UNC Charlotte and elsewhere throughout the country. Due to these structural limitations, I explicitly welcome guests in the classroom in the event that other arrangements cannot be made. This includes breastfeeding infants, school-aged children with school holidays, young children for whom regular childcare is temporarily not available, older individuals under your care, and any other reasonable situation. If you plan to bring a guest to class, please consider the nature of the material to be covered in class that day as many of our course discussions will include mature topics.

COMMUNICATION POLICY:

I try to be available to students as much as possible. In addition to being available during office hours, feel free to email me at light1@uncc.edu with questions. I will respond to emails within 24 hours, but usually much sooner. However, if there is no question in the email that needs to be answered or the question is explicitly stated here in the syllabus, I will not respond to the email. Also, if the email is not written in a professional manner, I will request ONCE that you follow proper formatting, after which I will stop communicating with you via email.

ON CAMPUS RESOURCES AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Jamil Niner Student Pantry (JNSP): Food insecurity is defined by the USDA as “a lack of access to enough food for an active, healthy life.” Food insecure categories include: reduced caloric intake, reduced food quality, lack of variety in diet, disrupted eating patterns, and hunger. Research shows that college students experience food insecurity at higher rates than the American household rate, and that food insecurity can negatively impact academic performance and persistence. In recognition of this problem, UNC Charlotte offers assistance to students facing food insecurity through an on-campus food pantry. The JNSP is located on the east edge of campus at 1224 John Kirk Road. It has regular hours which may change from semester to semester; please see the website at <https://ninerpantry.uncc.edu/> for schedule and details on its services, as well as resources about hunger and food insecurity among college students.

Title IX Reporting Policy: UNC Charlotte is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these incidents, know that you are not alone. UNC Charlotte has staff members trained to support you

in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

Please be aware that many UNC Charlotte employees, including all faculty members, are considered [Responsible Employees](#) who are required to relay any information or reports of sexual misconduct they receive to the Title IX Coordinator. This means that if you tell me about a situation involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, I must report the information to the Title IX Coordinator. Although I have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can contact any of the following on-campus resources, who are not required to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator: (1) [University Counseling Center](#) (7-0311); or (2) [Student Health Center](#) (7-7400); or (3) Department of Athletics psychologist (tbrandt5@uncc.edu). Additional information about your options is also available at titleix.uncc.edu under the “Students” tab.

Academic Assistance & Accommodations: I encourage all of my students to seek out additional assistance if they are concerned about their academic performance (and even if they are not). I am always available to meet with students either during my office hours or by appointment. In addition, the university provides a number of services designed to help students excel academically. Students in this course seeking accommodations to disabilities must first consult with the [Office of Disability Services](#) and follow the instructions of that office for obtaining accommodations.

Scholastic Dishonesty: While I recognize that adjusting to college academics can be a challenging time, I do not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty in my class. I will not tolerate any attempts to manipulate grading opportunities or misappropriate credit for work done and will penalize any student violating the university policies on scholastic dishonesty. I reserve the right to ask students to demonstrate that graded assignments completed outside of class are their own work. All students are required to read and abide by the [Code of Student Academic Integrity](#). Violations of the Code of Student Academic Integrity, including plagiarism, will result in disciplinary action as provided in the Code. Definitions and examples of plagiarism are set forth in the Code.

Ethical Learning Expectations: All students and the instructors are expected to engage with each other respectfully. Unwelcome conduct directed toward another person based upon that person’s actual or perceived race, actual or perceived gender, religion, age, national origin, ethnicity, disability, or veteran status, or for any other reason, may constitute a violation of University Policy 406, The Code of Student Responsibility.

Any student suspected of engaging in such conduct will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. All students are required to abide by the [UNC Charlotte Sexual Harassment Policy](#) and the policy on [Responsible Use of University Computing and Electronic Communication Resources](#). Sexual harassment, as defined in the UNC Charlotte Sexual Harassment Policy, is prohibited, even when carried out through computers or other electronic communications systems, including course-based chat rooms or message boards.

REVISIONS POLICY

The standards and requirements set forth in this syllabus may be modified at any time by the course instructor. Notice of such changes will be by announcement in class or by changes to this syllabus posted on the course in Canvas.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE – SUBJECT TO CHANGE

	Date	Class Topics	Assignment Due
UNIT ONE: ETHNOGRAPHY	Aug 24	Introduction	
	Aug 31	Medical Anthropology <i>Breathtaking</i>	Reading #1 Kenner Intro, Ch 1-3
	Sept 7	<i>Breathtaking</i> Discussion – <i>The Anthropologist???</i>	Kenner Ch 4 & 5 Reading #2
UNIT TWO: CLIMATE SCIENCE	Sept 14	Why Teach About Climate Change? What Should Everyone Understand?	VRP 1 Due TFGCC – Chapter 1 TFGCC – Chapter 2
	Sept 21	What is Climate? Discussion – <i>Before the Flood</i>	TFGCC – Chapter 3
	Sept 28	Climate Change Through Earth’s History Recent Climate Change	VRP 2 Due TFGCC – Chapter 4 TFGCC – Chapter 5
	Oct 5	EXAM (on Canvas)	
	Oct 12	FALL RECESS – NO CLASS	
UNIT THREE: CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN HEALTH	Oct 19	Human Evolution Health in Early Societies	Reading #3 Reading #4
	Oct 26	Social Collapse? Discussion – <i>Ice and Brimstone</i>	Reading #5
	Nov 2	Water and Pollution	VRP 3 Due Reading #6 Reading #7
	Nov 9	Nutrition, Livestock, and Food Security	Reading #8 Reading #9 Reading #10
	Nov 16	Disease Transfer Temperature-related Mortality	Reading #11 Reading #12 Reading #13
	Nov 23	Maternal and Child Health Discussion – <i>A Dangerous Future</i>	Reading #14 Reading #15
	Nov 30	Interpersonal Conflict Human Displacement	VRP 4 Due Reading #16 Reading #17
	Dec 7	Sociopolitical factors	Reading #18 Reading #19
	Dec 14	2-4:30 PM	Final Project Presentations