

[PLSC 3XX - Section X]
**CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN MIGRATION:
IMPACTS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES**
[DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE]
[X UNIVERSITY]

Instructor: Elisa D'Amico

Term: Fall/Spring 202X

Course Dates: X

Office Hours: X

Email: edamico2@luc.edu

Days & Times: X

Course Location: X

Office: X

Course Description and Objectives

This course explores the relationship between climate change and human migration, focusing on the impacts, challenges, and opportunities associated with this complex and dynamic phenomenon. We will examine the environmental, social, and economic drivers of climate migration, the various types of climate migration, and the ways in which climate refugees are affected by human rights and policy responses. We will also explore how climate change intersects with conflict, community, and sustainable development, and investigate the adaptation strategies and opportunities available to communities and governments to mitigate the negative impacts of climate migration. Throughout the course, we will examine case studies from around the world to gain a deeper understanding of the diverse experiences of climate migrants and the policy responses that have been developed to address this issue.

Students who complete this course will:

1. Understand the relationship between climate change and human migration, including the environmental, social, and economic drivers of climate migration.
2. Critically analyze the impacts of climate migration on individuals, communities, and societies, and the challenges associated with responding to this complex phenomenon.
3. Examine the ways in which climate change intersects with conflict and community, and the role of policy responses in addressing the climate, migration, and conflict nexus.
4. Understand the different types of climate migration, including internal displacement, cross-border migration, and planned relocation.
5. Explore the concept of the climate refugee, including the ways in which climate refugees are affected by human rights and policy responses.
6. Analyze the policy responses to climate migration, including the international legal framework, national policies, and community-based approaches.
7. Evaluate adaptation strategies and opportunities for communities and governments to mitigate the negative impacts of climate migration and promote sustainable development.
8. Gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with climate migration, and the projections for future trends in this area

Required Texts

[McAdam, J. \(2012\). *Climate change, forced migration, and international law*. Oxford University Press.](#)

[Black, R., Adger, W. N., Arnell, N. W., Dercon, S., Geddes, A., & Thomas, D. \(2011\). *Migration and global environmental change: future challenges and opportunities.*](#)

[Mearns, R., & Norton, A. \(Eds.\). \(2009\). *Social dimensions of climate change: Equity and vulnerability in a warming world*. World Bank Publications.](#)

The primary course texts are provided in the list above, with supplementary reading materials accessible via the weekly schedule. Given the course's thematic focus on climate and environment, there will be no requirement for a physical textbook. Additionally, the course's particular emphasis on climate refugees highlights the importance of addressing socioeconomic disparities. As such, all required readings will be made available to students free of charge in an effort to ensure that access to course materials is equitable.

Grades

Final grades for the course will be based on the following scale. I reserve the right to make adjustments to individual grades based on overall performance in the course and/or extenuating circumstances.

Grade scale: A: 93.5 - 100 A-: 89.5 - 93.5 B+: 86.5 - 89.5 B: 83.5 - 86.5 B-: 79.5 - 83.5
C+: 76.5 - 79.5 C: 73.5 - 76.5 C-: 69.5 - 73.5 D+: 66.5 - 69.5 D: 59.5 - 66.5
F: 0 - 59.5

The proportion of each assignment as part of your overall grade is as follows:

- Participation 10%
- Response memos: 20%
- Group Simulation: 15%
- Midterm Paper: 20%
- Final: 35%
 - Final Presentations: 15%
 - Final Paper: 20%

Each assignment's grade will be added to the Sakai gradebook within one week of the due date; Midterm and final grades will be reported in LOCUS. Midterm grades will be reported no later than the ninth week of the semester so that students with grades of C- or lower can make an informed decision of whether to withdraw from the class. The last day to withdraw with a W falls on the tenth week of the semester. Refer to the LUC [academic calendar online](#) for specific dates.

Participation

On most Fridays, there will be a class discussion to synthesize the materials of the week. During these sessions, students will be grouped together and prompted with several reflection questions from the week's readings. After deliberation and discussion, each group will then have a chance to present their thoughts on their assigned prompt and engage in class discussion to accumulate participation points for the semester.

Response Memos

Once a week, students are expected to post a 200- to 300-word response memo in Sakai that addresses readings, concepts, or topics discussed during that week's sessions. Except for weeks where you are not expected to submit (see "Weekly Schedule" below), memos are due each Friday by 11:55pm. Some weeks will include unique prompts about particular questions or activities so it is important to review the Sakai forum before writing. Late memos will be automatically deducted a full letter grade every 24 hours. Memos not submitted within 72 hours of the original due date / time receive an automatic failing grade.

Group Simulation

During Week 9, students will participate in a class-wide matrix game that simulates a debate on the status of climate refugees. You will be divided into small groups (approx. 4-5) to represent certain actors and gameplay will incorporate group discussion, negotiation, and public speaking. Details on the specific scenario will be explained in-class and on Sakai later in the semester.

Midterm Paper

The course includes a midterm paper of 3-5 pages that requires students to critically analyze the issue of whether climate refugees should be granted classic refugee status under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Students will be expected to draw from the course materials and conduct independent research to support their arguments. This assignment will challenge students to think deeply about the legal and ethical implications of treating climate refugees as classic refugees, and consider the potential consequences of such a decision.

Midterm Papers are due [insert date and time].

Final Presentations

Students will be required to give a presentation on a specific country case study, as determined by the student's preferences. The presentation will cover various aspects related to climate change and displacement, including the nature of the climate problem in the country, the nature of displacement, existing efforts to address the problem, the actors involved, and any obstacles faced in addressing the problem. Students will also be expected to provide projections regarding the potential future impact of climate change on the country, including the industry that is affected, social and political consequences, and more. The presentation should be well-researched and incorporate a range of sources, including academic articles, policy documents, and media reports. Throughout the presentation, students should aim to clearly and effectively communicate their findings to the audience, highlighting key points and providing compelling evidence to support their claims. The final presentation provides an opportunity for students to showcase their research and analytical skills, as well as their ability to communicate complex information in a clear and engaging manner. **Final presentation dates: [insert dates and times]**

Final Paper

Drawing on the students' Final Presentations, the final paper for this course is a corresponding policy brief/proposal. The paper should be 5-7 pages in length and will address the issue of climate displacement in the selected country. Students will be expected to conduct independent research to identify and analyze the challenges that the country faces in relation to climate displacement. They will also need to propose policy solutions that could address these challenges, along with potential funding sources to support these solutions. The policy brief/proposal should be written with a targeted audience in mind, such as government officials or non-governmental organizations. Students should aim to be concise and persuasive in their writing, highlighting the urgency of the issue and the viability of their proposed solutions. This assignment provides students with the opportunity to apply their knowledge of climate change and human migration to a specific real-world case study. Through the process of conducting research and crafting a policy proposal, students will develop their critical thinking, research, and writing skills. **Final Papers are due by the end of the schedule Final Exam session on [insert date and time].**

Extra Credit

Extra credit opportunities may be provided on an as-need basis. If you believe that this need applies to you, please contact me during the semester. Otherwise, extra credit opportunities may arise circumstantially. Stay tuned in class for this potential occurrence.

Communication, Office Hours, Question about Grades

Please direct all communication with me outside class or office hours via email, which can be found in the header of this syllabus. I do my best to reply to student emails as quickly as possible but students should not necessarily expect me to reply immediately, especially regarding last-minute inquiries or questions asked over a weekend. For example, I may not be able to reply to questions about exams or assignments after 7p the day before it is scheduled/due.

Regular office hours will be held every [insert here], except on university holidays (or by appointment). If you can't make those times, email me to schedule a more convenient appointment time.

My office hours exist for you to come to me with questions about this class and other academic thoughts or concerns. Email is only for brief communications; long and complicated questions should be discussed during office hours. With respect to grades, after I have graded and returned your assignments, there is a 24-hour moratorium before I will answer questions about that assignment.

Technology Use

You should only use your laptops to participate in the class activities and take notes but please refrain from distractions. In addition, the use of cell phones is not allowed during class so unless you have an extenuating circumstance, I suggest silencing your phone and putting it face down before class begins.

Students with Disabilities

Loyola University provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD), located in Sullivan Center, Suite 117. Students should provide me with an accommodation notification from SSWD, preferably within the first two weeks of class. Students are encouraged to meet with me individually in order to discuss their accommodations. All information will remain confidential. For more information or further assistance, please call (773) 508-3700 or visit the [accommodations website](#).

Academic Integrity

It is my expectation that this course is a community of integrity. This means that we not only follow Loyola's academic honesty criteria but make a promise to be honest and respectful to each other both inside and outside the classroom. Students are responsible for adhering to university policy on academic honesty and avoiding acts of plagiarism or cheating. Assignments such as the response memos may be submitted via Turnitin. Students can find more information about what constitutes plagiarism at the [Writing Center's website](#). Consult the [College of Arts and Sciences' statement](#) to learn more about college policy.

I reserve the right to exercise case-by-case discretion in assigning penalties for acts of academic dishonesty. Generally speaking, however, students should expect to receive a score of "0" on any assignment or exam where they are observed plagiarizing, cheating, or passing off someone else's ideas as their own. If more than one instance occurs during the semester, offending students should expect to fail my course. I report all acts of academic dishonesty to the Dean of College of Arts and Science's office.

A Note on Civility

I expect students enrolled in my class to converse with one another respectfully. Political discussions are often challenging since issues affect us on a personal level but this is not an excuse to lose control of yourself or your emotions. This class provides an opportunity for students to practice talking about politics in a public setting, especially with people they may disagree with. Engaging in civil discourse without engaging in personal attacks or hate speech is a necessary skill for living and working in a diverse society.

"I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

Evelyn Beatrice Hall - *The Friends of Voltaire*

Readings and Assignments

All readings and assignments are to be completed *before* the beginning of class on the day listed, unless otherwise noted. Read carefully and be ready to discuss the material, as discussions based around these readings will be integral to your response memos and your other graded assignments. I reserve the right to make changes to the reading list and will inform students in writing of any changes

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

[*No memo due*]

- MONDAY: Introductions and syllabus review
- WEDNESDAY: Introduction to Climate Change and Human Migration
[McAdam](#), Chapter 1
- FRIDAY: Introduction to Climate Change and Human Migration
[Black et al.](#), Section 2.3: How global environmental change influences the drivers of migration

WEEK 2

- MONDAY: NO CLASS (Labor Day)
- WEDNESDAY: Environmental Drivers of Climate Migration: Understanding Vulnerability
[Mearns & Norton](#), Chapter 2
- FRIDAY: Environmental Drivers of Climate Migration: Understanding Vulnerability
[Brown, O. \(2008\). *Migration and climate change*. United Nations.](#)

WEEK 3

- MONDAY: Social and Economic Factors and Migration
[Black et al.](#), Section 2.2: The drivers of migration
- WEDNESDAY: Social and Economic Factors and Migration
[Mearns & Norton](#), Chapter 4
- FRIDAY: Social and Economic Factors and Migration
IN CLASS: Group Discussion

WEEK 4

- MONDAY: Climate, Migration, Conflict Nexus
[Werz, M., & Conley, L. \(2012\). *Climate change, migration, and conflict: Addressing complex crisis scenarios in the 21st century*. *Center for American Progress*, 46. \[pages 11-23\]](#)

WEDNESDAY: Climate, Migration, Conflict Nexus
[De Chatel. \(2014\). The Role of Drought and Climate Change in the Syrian Uprising: Untangling the Triggers of the Revolution. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 50\(4\), 521–535.](#)

FRIDAY: Climate, Migration, Conflict Nexus
IN CLASS: Group Discussion

WEEK 5

MONDAY: Types of Climate Migration
[IOM: Environmental Migration](#)

WEDNESDAY: Types of Climate Migration
[World Bank: Millions on the Move in Their Own Countries: The Human Face of Climate Change](#)

FRIDAY: Types of Climate Migration
IN CLASS: Group Discussion

WEEK 6

MONDAY: The Face of the Climate Refugee
IN CLASS: [Climate Refugees Movie, Michael Nash](#) & Discussion

WEDNESDAY: The Face of the Climate Refugee
IN CLASS: [Climate Refugees Movie, Michael Nash](#) & Discussion

FRIDAY: The Face of the Climate Refugee
IN CLASS: [Climate Refugees Movie, Michael Nash](#) & Discussion

WEEK 7

MONDAY: NO CLASS (Mid-Semester Break)

WEDNESDAY: Climate Refugees and Human Rights
[McAdam](#), Chapter 2

FRIDAY: Climate Refugees and Human Rights
[McAdam](#), Chapter 3

WEEK 8

- MONDAY: Policy Responses to Climate Migration
[McAdam, Chapter 4](#)
- WEDNESDAY: Policy Responses to Climate Migration
[McAdam](#), Chapter 5
- FRIDAY: Policy Responses to Climate Migration
IN CLASS: Group Discussion
*Midterm Paper Due

WEEK 9

[*No memo due*]

- MONDAY: UN Simulation Day One
Read preparation materials in Sakai
- WEDNESDAY: UN Simulation Day Two
- FRIDAY: UN Simulation Wrap-up
Each group will give a short (5-10 min.) report on their experience and outcomes.

WEEK 10

- MONDAY: Community and the Local Level
[Mearns & Norton](#), Chapter 7
- WEDNESDAY: Community and the Local Level
[King, S. \(2014\). Community-based adaptation in practice: A global overview of CARE International's practice of community-based adaptation \(CBA\) to climate change. Poverty Environment and Climate Change Network \(PECCN\) for CARE International.](#) [Choose either section 4, 5, or 6 to read]
- FRIDAY: Community and the Local Level
IN CLASS: Group Discussion

WEEK 11

- MONDAY: Adaptation Strategies for Climate Migration
[Black et al.](#), 7.3 Planning for urban growth and adaptation
- WEDNESDAY: Adaptation Strategies for Climate Migration
[Black et al.](#), Section 8 (all)
- FRIDAY: Adaptation Strategies for Climate Migration
IN CLASS: Group Discussion

WEEK 12

- MONDAY: Opportunities for Urban and Sustainable Development
[Mearns & Norton](#), Chapter 9
*Final Project Preferences Due
- WEDNESDAY: Opportunities for Urban and Sustainable Development
[Goldin & Folay. \(2023\). Green Jobs and Global Youth: Can Clean Energy Power Positive Youth Development? Abt Associates.](#) [Podcast or Transcript]
- FRIDAY: Opportunities for Urban and Sustainable Development
IN CLASS: Group Discussion

WEEK 13

[*No memo due*]

- MONDAY: Looking Ahead: Projections and Challenges
[World Bank Groundswell Report: 2.5 Projected Climate Migration to 2050 Across Six Regions](#)
[Black et al.](#), Section 6 (all)
- WEDNESDAY: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)
- FRIDAY: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

WEEK 14

[*No memo due*]

- MONDAY: Looking Ahead: Challenges and Opportunities
[Bring three detailed challenges/obstacles to climate migration or adaptation policy which the class will discuss]

WEDNESDAY: In Class Work Day

FRIDAY: Presentations Day 1

WEEK 15
[*No memo due*]

MONDAY: Presentations Day 2

WEDNESDAY: Presentations Day 3

FRIDAY: Presentations Day 4

FINAL EXAM: [Date] at [Time]

Final exam times are set by the university and cannot be rescheduled without approval from the Dean's Office. See full schedule [here](#).