JPG 1818H
Syllabus Fall 2019 *(for reference only)*

THE GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING OF CLIMATE ACTION AND ACTIVISM

Instructor: Professor Sue Ruddick
Course time and place: Thursday, 4-6pm, ONLINE for Fall 2020
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Office Hours: Wednesday 11 am – 1 pm or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
In the face of growing concerns around the climate crisis and its immediate and long-term impacts on our planet, organizations focused on activism and action have mushroomed locally and globally – from the very local scale to the international scale. The course builds on an initial panel discussion featuring ten key organizations that are locally engaged in climate activism.

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to range of tools critical to successful mobilization (both within and outside of the state). The course draws on a range of scholarly literature on effective strategies of social mobilization - from geography, planning and cognate disciplines -- as well as a range resources from social movement organizations. Though focused on questions of climate activism in the Canadian context we often incorporate lessons learned from other kinds of social movements in other locales. Students will be encouraged to focus on context dependent appraisals of the challenges and opportunities afforded by different approaches to mobilization around the climate crisis.

The course will kick off with a 3-hour panel on Friday Sept 13th from 3pm – 6pm at Innis College Town Hall. Ten climate organizations will present their strategies, success stories and upcoming challenges. Throughout the course students will be invited to reflect on insights from readings in relation to these and other local organizing efforts.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
In this course we will explore a broad schematization of the varied responses to the climate crisis and where different organizations fit within this schema. We will also reflect on lessons regarding challenges and opportunities to a range of approaches to social mobilization around climate mitigation.

• Core question that will focus on the relative efficacy of a wide range of characteristics of social mobilization efforts responding to the climate crisis. These include the internal organization of movements, communication strategies in the framing of issues and use of media platforms, development of a taxonomy of strategies and tactics, spatial strategies of mobilization, the creation of “sticky” demands and policies, coalition building and networking, and ways of sustaining activism over the long term.

• Students will be encouraged to think dialogically in their appraisal the range of opportunities offered by diverse approaches, ways they might work together in the short or long term, and both the possibilities of and limits to collaborations.
ASSIGNMENTS
1. Students will select readings for comment and produce an infographic, or some other Knowledge Mobilization material summarizing main points – a few organizations I have talked with suggested a need for knowledge translation and quick summaries of scholarly material on organizing strategies.
2. Students will work in assigned teams to create a workplan, interim materials and final materials for groups we are working with – this year Climate Justice Montreal, Generation Chosen and Climate Pledge Collective. These projects have been elaborated in advance over the summer, by these organizations in conversation with course instructor.

THE GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING OF CLIMATE ACTION AND ACTIVISM
SYLLABUS AND DEADLINES
(typically 2 required readings a week and several optional)

Week 1 Sept 9: Introduction – Building Communities of Praxis - Who are We?
(Students will be organized prior to class start (a few days before) into teams to work on projects for Climate Justice Montreal, Generation Chosen and Climate Pledge Collective. Week one we will meet with organizers via ZOOM for the second hour of class)

Week 2 Sept 16: Climate, Crisis and Conjuncture – Where are We Part 1?
(will revise to include readings on climate and COVID)

Week 3 Sept 23: Exploring Climate X, and the need for Climate Justice: Where are We - Part 2?
(optional)
(will revise to emphasize readings on anti-racist and decolonial approaches)
**Week 4 Sept 30: Parties, Movements, States**
Lopes de Souza, M. (2006). Together with the state, despite the state, against the state: Social movements as 'critical urban planning' agents. City, 10(3), 327-342. doi:10.1080/13604810600982347 (optional)

*(students will present workplan to climate activist organizations in second hour)*

**Week 5 Oct 7: Mobilization and the Internal Organization of Social Movements**


*(will include readings on relational organizing in times of pandemic)*

**NO CLASS OCTOBER 14TH – THANKSGIVING WEEKEND**

**Week 6 Oct 21: Framing Strategies -- the medium**

**Week 7 Oct 28: Framing Strategies -- the Message**


(Will include readings on knowledge mobilization strategies – resources for creating infographics, tiktok videos and other material engaging social media)

**Week 8 Nov 4: Strategies and tactics within and beyond the state**


**Week 9 Nov 11: Spatial Strategies**


Davis, M. (2018). Old gods, new enigmas: Marx's lost theory. London: Verso. [Chapter 10 Who will build the ark? (Also published as Davis 2010 Who will build the ark New Left Review]


Light Blue Line https://tnms.org/lightblueline/ (optional)
**Week 10 Nov 18: Network Coalition Building**


(optional)


*(will update to include readings on moving from ally to accomplice)*

**Week 11 Nov 25: Sustaining Activism**


(optional)


**Week 12 Dec 2: Wrap-up Class Discussion**

*(draft presentations by class to fellow classmates and climate activist organizations)*