Anthropology 385B (Spring 2016)

Climate Change and Cultural Response:
Past, Present and Future

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Office Hours: M/W 10:30-11:30 or by appointment

Record high temperatures, rising seas and raging storms. There is no doubt that climate change is a reality for us and for generations to come, yet there is still much uncertainty about how it will affect our lives. This course investigates cultural response to climate change. The central questions we address are: What is abrupt climate change? How has it been documented for the past? What were the consequences and how did humanity cope? What is happening now? What can we learn from the past as we focus on the present and as we look to the future?

The instructor is an archaeologist by training, with broad interests in climate change, and active research in the Pacific Islands and China. Many of the case studies we will examine focus on the Pacific Islands and Asia.

This course is interdisciplinary and the goal is to bring together students from all sub-fields of anthropology. The course is designed for upper-division undergraduates and graduate students. Students from other departments are also welcome.

This class is writing intensive. There will be a research paper (10 pp + biblio) and other shorter writing assignments. You are required to take notes in class and there will be a “note check” every Wednesday. You can use your class notes (but no other materials) during the mid-term exam. There is no final exam.

Expected learning outcomes:
• A detailed understanding of abrupt climate change.
• An appreciation of how understanding the past can serve as a guide to planning for the future.
• The ability to plan, research, and write a well-organized scholarly paper.
• The ability to understand, articulate, and evaluate scientific hypotheses.
• The ability to conceptualize and design solutions to real-world problems.

Download from Laulima at https://laulima.hawaii.edu/portal
Handouts and readings
# Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

## Part 1. Culture and climate change: Introduction

### January

13 M **Introduction. The anthropology of abrupt climate change: Causes and consequences**  
  Kiribati: 5 minute call to the world

14 W **The anthropology of climate change and sustainability**  
  **Read:** “Baer and Reuter 2015”
  **Online resources.** Peer-review journals, keywords, search engines.  
  **SUBMIT 1 PAGE SELF-INTRODUCTION & A WRITING SAMPLE (PREVIOUS PAPER)**

18 M **MLK Day. No class.**

20 W **Climate change and human conflict**  
  **Read:** “Solow 2011” and “Hsiang et al. 2011”
  **PAPER STEP 1:** **SUBMIT .5 – 1 PAGE STATING IDEAS RELATING TO YOUR PAPER TOPIC AND SOME PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS**

25 M **Movie: An Inconvenient Truth**

27 W **Cultural response to late Holocene climate change**  
  **Read:** “deMenocal 2001”
  **Discussion/response paper due**
  **PAPER STEP 2:** **SUBMIT TOPIC**

### February

1 M **Human impact on planet earth: A recent event or did it begin thousands of years ago?**  
  **Read:** “Monastersky 2015” and “Lewis and Maslin 2015”

3 W **Human impact on planet earth: A recent event or did it begin thousands of years ago?**  
  **Read:** “Monastersky 2015” and “Lewis and Maslin 2015”
  **Discussion/response paper due**

8 M **Guest lecture: Understanding the science behind climate change**  
  (Dr. Matthew Widlansky, UH-M School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology)
  **Read:** “Mann et al. 2009 or TBA”
  **PAPER STEP 3:** **SUBMIT .5 – 1 PAGE REFINED PROPOSAL**

## Part 2. Learning from the past. The Little Ice Age (ca. AD 1400 - 1700) and the Medieval Climate Anomaly (ca. AD 950 – 1250): How they wreaked havoc on ancient cultures

10 W **How humans adapt to climate change**  
  **Read:** “Orlove 2005”
Discussion/response paper due

15 M President’s Day. No class

17 W The downfall of the Khmer Empire (Cambodia)
Read: “Buckley et al. 2010”
Discussion/response paper due

22 M PAPER STEP 4: RESEARCH PITCH SESSIONS (PART ONE)

24 W Climate change helped the Mongols conquer China
Read: “Pederson et al. 2014”
PAPER STEP 4: RESEARCH PITCH SESSIONS (PART TWO)

29 M Exam 1 (open notes)

March
2 W The Maya collapse
Read: “Peterson and Haug 2005”
PAPER STEP 5: SUBMIT 75 WORD ABSTRACT AND BIBLIOGRAPHY (AT LEAST 5 SOURCES)

7 M Norse mis-adventures in Greenland
Read: “Diamond 2005 (Collapse)"
Discussion/response paper due

Part 3. Culture and climate change: Where are we now?
9 W The anthropology of consumer culture and climate change
Read: “Wilk 2009”
PAPER STEP 6: SUBMIT 1 PAGE INTRODUCTION AND 1 PAGE OUTLINE

14 M Writing your Research Paper

16 W Climate change and moral judgement
Read: “Markowitz and Shariff 2012”
PAPER STEP 7: SUBMIT FIRST DRAFT

Spring break March 21 - 25

28 M Climate change deniers: Why do they believe what they do?
Read: “TBA”

30 W Guest lecture: How sea-level rise impacts Hawaii
PAPER STEP 8: SUBMIT FIRST DRAFT

April
4 M Revising your Research Paper

6 W The economy of climate change: cap and trade
Read: "TBA"

11 M Movie: There Once was an Island

Part 4. Culture and climate change: The future
13 W Future population growth and impacts on climate change
Read “O’Neill et al. 2010”

18 M Movie: Climate Refugees DVD 12585

20 W Climate change and forced resettlement
Read: “Sherbinin et al. 2011”

25 M Imagining a worst case scenario
Read: “Oreskes and Conway 2013”
Discussion/response paper due

27 W PAPER STEP 9: SUBMIT FINAL DRAFT
PAPER STEP 10: CLASS PRESENTATIONS

May
2 M PAPER STEP 10: CLASS PRESENTATIONS

4 W PAPER STEP 10: CLASS PRESENTATIONS

Grading
Your grade will be based on the total number of points you earn in the various class activities, assignments, and exams. There are 100 possible points and their distribution is as follows:

Exam 1  20
10 page research paper
Step 1. Report on your research to form questions  3
Step 2. Topic  2
Step 3. Refined proposal  3
Step 4. Research pitch session  2
Step 5. Abstract and bibliography  4
Step 6. Introduction and outline  4
Step 7. Two body paragraphs  4
Step 8. First draft  15
Step 9. Final draft  15
Step 10. Class presentation  4

5 discussion/response papers (1.5 page each)  15
Participation (attendance, class notes, discussion)  10
TOTAL  100

A+ = 97-100  A= 93-96  A- = 90-92
Writing your Research Paper

Writing your research paper is a process, not an event. Plans for the paper will begin during the third week of class. Steps in this process, all of which will involve written feedback and individual discussion, include: selecting a topic, submitting a paper outline and preliminary bibliography, submitting the rough draft, revising the rough draft and submitting the final paper.

Schedule for Research Paper

January 20  Step 1. Submit report on your research to form questions
January 27  Step 2. Submit topic
February 8  Step 3. Submit refined proposal
February 22 and 24  Step 4. Research pitch sessions
March 2  Step 5. Submit abstract and bibliography (at least 5 sources)
March 9  Step 6. Submit introduction and outline
March 16  Step 7. Submit two body paragraphs
March 30  Step 8. Submit first draft
April 27  Step 9. Submit final draft
May 2, 4  Step 10. Class presentations

• The 5 discussion/response papers can only be submitted in class on the day they are due. No credit for late papers. The instructor will return your discussion/response papers with written comments, initiating a dialogue that will be continued in class.

• You have one free pass for Steps 1 – 7, meaning that you may submit any one assignment late (5 days max). Otherwise no credit for late papers.

• No free pass for Steps 8 and 9 (draft and final paper). No credit for late papers.

• No exceptions without a written medical excuse.

• One (but only one) extra credit assignment worth up to a maximum of 3 points. Points will be taken off for late submissions unless you have a written medical excuse.

Writing Workshop

Offers help in organizing your papers and editing your written work. You can meet with someone for half an hour to determine your needs, and then schedule additional sessions as needed.

Kuykendall Room 402; tel. 956-7619
http://maven.english.hawaii.edu/workshop/index.html