

POL 4850 - Sustainability, Climate Change, and Society

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 01, CRN 44001,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

Abdullahi Hersi

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Public Instructor Information

Instructor Title: Dr. Hersi

Instructor Professional Qualifications: PhD in Peace and Conflict Studies: from Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology; MA in Conflict Resolution and Peace Building: from Kampala International University; BA in Sociology and Philosophy, from Egerton University

Instructor Office Location: Online Office

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Course Description

4850. Sustainability, Climate Change, and Society. Explores environmental, economic, and social aspects of sustainable development, with an emphasis on economy and society. Examines the roles of institutions, humans and policies in sustainable development as well as reconfiguring relationships between our institutions and the natural world. Listed also as ENST 5820. Prereq.: Minimum junior standing. 3 s.h.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Climate Change: What Everyone Needs to Know (2nd ed.)	• Romm, Joseph.	
Required	The Politics of Climate Change (3rd ed.).	• Giddens, Anthony	

Readings may be updated throughout the semester based on new research, emerging global events, or instructional needs. While the required textbooks provide foundational theoretical and scientific knowledge, **the primary instructional materials in this course will consist of applied case studies, policy reports, and analytical documents produced by credible academic and international institutions.** Students are expected to engage actively with these materials to develop a comprehensive understanding of climate–society dynamics.

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
8/24	Romm Ch.1	Introduction to Sustainability, Climate Change & Society	Reading
8/31	Romm Ch.2–3	Climate Science Foundations & SES Theory	Discussion Post #1 (Due Sept 7)
9/7	Giddens Ch.1	Socio Economic Dimensions of Climate Change	Short Report #1 (Due Sept 14)
9/14	Giddens Ch.2	Global Environmental Politics & Climate Governance	Reading
9/21	Selected readings	Political Ecology & Climate Justice	Analytical Essay (Due Sept 28)Reading
9/28	Climate Security readings	Climate Security & Environmental Conflict	Reading
10/5	Romm Ch.4	Human Security & Climate Risks	Midterm Exam (Due Oct 12)
10/12	UNDP/UNEP Reports	Humanitarian Crises in a Changing Climate	Reading

10/19	Romm Ch.5	Adaptation Strategies	Reading
10/26	Giddens Ch.3	Mitigation Strategies & Low Carbon Transitions	Short Report #2 (Due Nov 2)
11/2	Romm Ch.6	International Organizations & Climate Governance	Reading
11/9	Climate Diplomacy readings	Climate Negotiation Simulation	Simulation & Debate (Due Nov 16)
11/16	Giddens Ch.4	Globalization & Transnational Climate Issues	Reading
11/23	Selected readings	Emerging Challenges in Climate–Society Relations	Reading
11/30	UN Global Climate Conference 2024–2025	Climate Finance Policy	Final Exam Assignment (Due Dec 7)
12/7			Final Policy Brief Submission

The course schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better learning.