

Honors Academy

Summer 2020

Taking the Pulse of Montana

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Version 3

Instructors:

Douglas Fischer has been a journalist for 25 years and has covered climate change since 2008 as editor and then director of Environmental Health Sciences, an independent, foundation-funded news service. He has won numerous awards for his reporting, including an international prize in 2009 for coverage of global climate politics. Fischer has worked in the newsrooms of the *Oakland Tribune*, the *Fairbanks (Alaska) Daily News-Miner*, and *Newsweek*. He has spent almost a decade covering climate science and international climate talks and will guide students in science communication and policy development from a journalistic perspective.

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Tony Hartshorn is a faculty member in the Department of Land Resources & Environmental Sciences (LRES) at MSU and has developed climate literacy initiatives since 2009, when he started teaching at James Madison University. One course he designed built student awareness of how choices relating to “Gas, food, lodging” can translate into globally significant “forcings” relating to greenhouse gas emissions. In 2009, Hartshorn led two training workshops for two Native American tribes in the measurement of soil carbon in Guyana to support UN REDD initiatives funded through Norway. Since arriving at MSU, Hartshorn has developed a climate literacy Pecha Kucha as part of a faculty workshop.

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Overview:

Science and policy increasingly collide on matters of great public import – climate change, the coronavirus response, land-use planning, local energy policy – often with explosive results. We continue to mine coal and drill for oil and gas, subsidize our fossil fuel infrastructure, even as the number of million- and billion-dollar fossil-fuel-related disasters climbs. As of this writing in late June, more than 500 people are dying every day in the United States from COVID-19ⁱ, even as governors, citizens, and college students shrug off public health warnings.

Our overarching goal: To examine the broader role science can play in informing public dialogue of important health and environmental issues facing society - and to understand why it often falls short. Recognizing this and charting a course of action may be the great generational challenge for the class of 2024.

Because of our pivot to remote instruction this 2020 iteration of Honors Academy, we will take a *virtual* tour of the state, seeking diverse perspectives on science and change, to probe the effectiveness of policy approaches and to witness the consequences unfolding in real time. Our voyage of discovery will traverse the state, bouncing from climate change to the pandemic, environmental justice and the political response to the magnetic beauty of the Northern Rockies and our greater Yellowstone ecosystem.

The culminating aspect of this course is a journal recording life during the pandemic that each student will submit for inclusion at the MSU Renne Library Special Collections Department, so future generations may learn from today's struggles and triumphs, through your eyes. To this end, our second synchronous meeting—July 15—will feature Jan Zauha, MSU Special Collections Librarian. Your journal effort will be patterned after recent 1918 pandemic archival work by Russell Johnson, a UCLA librarian (<https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/letters-and-diaries-1918-flu-pandemic>).

Goals:

This kick-off course will:

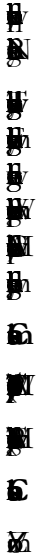
- Transform MSU students into global citizens.
- Bring local perspectives to international challenges.
- Offer a multi-disciplinary exploration – science, policy and culture.
- Impart the knowledge and perspectives necessary to allow students to assess a wide scope of challenges to science and policy, from campus- or city-level impacts to regional, federal, and international responses.

Objectives:

1. Improve students' understanding of the role and limits of science in guiding public policy and debate on crucial issues facing society, focusing specifically on climate change.
2. Improve students' understanding of the scale of drivers, impacts, solutions and necessary policy changes on a broad variety of urgent public issues.
3. Improve students' abilities to assess the scope of political responses to those challenges.
4. Improve, via regular exercise, student writing and communication skills.

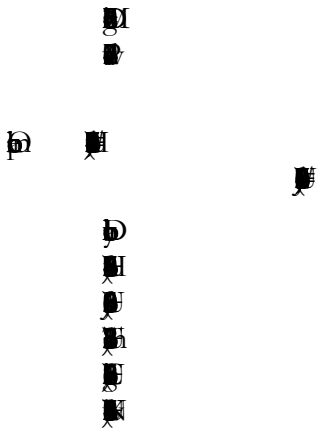
Design:

The course starts with an introduction of basic climate science, brings in pandemics and the local response to COVID-19, introduces environmental justice and varying political



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87074778248?pwd=NIJ3bm95VEJyRzh0NmEwUFFkTThDZz09>

Shortened: <https://bit.ly/Takingthepulse>



How Culture Shapes the Climate Change Debate



Evaluation:

Writing Assignments: 33%

- Paper 1: Your generation's obituary. Cast yourself 50 to 80 years into the future and write about what your generation has accomplished – or failed to do. Two pages, double spaced. **Due 5p MT Friday, July 24**
- Paper 2: Call for change op-ed. Pick your topic. Successful opinion pieces have three elements: A strong point of view, a clearly identified problem, and a fact-based solution. 700 words max. **Due 5p MT Friday, July 31**

Participation: 33%

Class participation in discussions will be tricky but is both essential and required.

This class will be conducted as an exploration, with students expected to come prepared for each class, having done not only the required reading but also having prepared a question or two for our guest lecturer or fellow students. A portion of each class will be devoted to discussion, facilitated by students.

Each class we will also spend a short time writing to a prompt. Handwriting is encouraged. We'll leave time to read a few aloud. And while this is completely optional, we encourage all of you to do so over the course of the class.

We also expect every student to subscribe to – and read! – a nonpartisan, daily aggregation of environmentally and/or politically themed news sources. Newsletter examples include EHN.org's "Above the Fold", Axios.com's "Axios AM", InsideClimate News, and "Heated".

Journal Project 33%

Life in these COVID times, or what it's like transitioning from high school to college in a pandemic. Capture the profane and the mundane of your life today. Can be multimedia (hand-written, art, music, video) but must be digitized, with a searchable text file accompanying any non-text submission. **Due 5p MT Friday, August 7**

Each student is also expected to prepare a brief oral presentation about your journal to share with the class during the last two sessions.

Paper/journal grading rubric:

30 percent spark

50 percent content

20 percent mechanics

A	93%	B-	80%	D+	67%
A-	90%	C+	77%	D	60%
B+	87%	C	73%	F	<60%
B	83%	C-	70%		

Schedule:

Day	Topic (readings)
Mon. July 13	Course introductions, goals, hopes & fears, acknowledgement of place <i>Assignment:</i> Complete the pre-class survey by 5p MT July 12
Wed. July 15	Overview of journal project goals, big question framing <i>Guest Lecturer:</i> Jan Zauha, MSU Renne Library Special Collections Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "It's not climate change, it's everything change," Margaret Atwood, Medium; link on D2L • "To a Stranger Born in Some Distant Country Hundreds of Years from Now," Billy Collins (PDF on D2L)
Fri. July 17	Climate science: Causes, solutions. Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook Chapters 1-2, How Culture Shapes the Climate Change Debate
Mon. July 20	Pandemics <i>Guest Lecturer:</i> Dr. Raina Plowright, MSU Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "There Isn't a Coronavirus 'Second Wave,'" Vice President Mike Pence, WSJ; PDF on D2L • Covid Blog, Montana Disease Ecology Lab • The Coronavirus Was an Emergency Until Trump Found Out Who Was Dying; <i>The Atlantic</i>, May 8, 2020
Wed. July 22	Local response to COVID-19: Opportunities, challenges <i>Guest Lecturer:</i> Matt Kelley, Gallatin City County Public Health Officer

Day	Topic (reading)
Fri. July 24	<p>About that journal...</p> <p>Guest Lecturers: Jan Zauha, MSU Renne Library Special Collections & Russell Johnson UCLA Library</p> <p>Readings (optional, but encouraged):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Trove of Sad, Funny, and Familiar Stories From the 1918 Flu Pandemic; <i>Atlas Obscura</i>; May 1, 2020 • ‘The Whole of Liberal Democracy Is in Grave Danger at This Moment;’ <i>New York Times</i>; July 22, 2020 <p><i>Assignment 1:</i> Your generation's obit. Cast yourself 50 to 80 years into the future and write about what your generation has accomplished – or failed to do. Two pages, double spaced. Due 5p MT</p>
Mon. July 27	<p>Political Responses, Part 1</p> <p><i>Guest Lecturer:</i> State Rep. Tom Woods, D-Bozeman</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 3-5, How Culture Shapes the Climate Change Debate • NWE’s proposed purchase will hurt ratepayers; <i>Bozeman Daily Chronicle</i>; Feb 25, 2020 <p><i>Assignment 1.5:</i> Add one or two questions to the “Daines Questions” Google sheet. Due 10:30a MT</p>
Wed. July 29	<p>Political Responses, Part 2</p> <p><i>Guest Lecturer:</i> U.S. Sen. Steve Daines, R-Mont.</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The weight of the world," Elizabeth Kolbert, <i>New Yorker</i> Aug 24, 2015 (http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/08/24/the-weight-of-the-world); on D2L

Day	Topic (reading)
Fri. July 31	Environmental Justice 101 <i>Guest Lecturer:</i> Dr. Mari Eggers, MSU & John Doyle, Little Bighorn Tribal College Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change Rippling through Our Waters and Culture, Martin et al. (PDF on D2L) • Exploring effects of climate change on Northern Plains American Indian health, Doyle et al. (PDF on D2L) • “Tainted water imperils health, traditions for Montana tribe.” EHN.org <i>Assignment 2:</i> Call for change op-ed. Pick your topic. Successful opinion pieces have three elements: A strong point of view, a clearly identified problem, and a fact-based solution. 700 words max. Due 5p MT
Mon. Aug 3	Change in the Northern Rockies; what’s a vaccine for climate change look like? <i>Guest Lecturer:</i> Dr. Cathy Whitlock, Regents Professor, MSU Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Summary, 2017 Montana Climate Assessment • COVID-19 response a roadmap to facing climate change; <i>Bozeman Daily Chronicle</i>, April 24, 2020
Wed. Aug 5	Student reflections, Part 1
Fri. Aug 7	Student reflections, Part 2 <i>Journal Project:</i> Life in these COVID times, or what it's like transitioning from high school to college in a pandemic. Capture the profane and the mundane of your life today. Can be multimedia (hand-written, art, music, video) but must be digitized, with a <i>searchable text file accompanying any non-text submission</i> . Due 5p MT

MSU Policies:

Behavioral Expectations:

Montana State University expects all students to conduct themselves as honest, responsible and law-abiding members of the academic community and to respect the rights of other students, members of the faculty and staff and the public to use, enjoy and participate in the University programs and facilities.

Collaboration:

University policy states that, unless otherwise specified, students may not collaborate on graded material. Any exceptions to this policy will be stated explicitly for individual

assignments. If you have any questions about the limits of collaboration, you are expected to ask for clarification.

Plagiarism:

Paraphrasing or quoting another's work without citing the source is a form of academic misconduct. Even inadvertent or unintentional misuse or appropriation of another's work (such as relying heavily on source material that is not expressly acknowledged) is considered plagiarism. If you have any questions about using and citing sources, you are expected to ask for clarification.

Academic Misconduct:

Section 420 of the Student Conduct Code describes academic misconduct as including but not limited to plagiarism, cheating, multiple submissions, or facilitating others' misconduct. Possible sanctions for academic misconduct range from an oral reprimand to expulsion from the university.

Section 430 of the Student Code allows the instructor to impose the following sanctions for academic misconduct: oral reprimand; written reprimand; an assignment to repeat the work or an alternate assignment; a lower or failing grade on the particular assignment or test; or a lower grade or failing grade in the course. More serious sanctions require a Conduct Board hearing. You may wish to make explicit the minimum sanction you will impose for willful acts of academic misconduct.

Academic Expectations:

Section 310.00 in the MSU Conduct Guidelines states that students must:

- be prompt and regular in attending classes;
- be well prepared for classes;
- submit required assignments in a timely manner;
- take exams when scheduled;
- act in a respectful manner toward other students and the instructor and in a way that does not detract from the learning experience; and
- make and keep appointments when necessary to meet with the instructor.
- In addition to the above items, students are expected to meet any additional course and behavioral standards as defined by the instructor.

Students with Disabilities:

If you have a documented disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation(s), you are encouraged to contact your instructor and Disabled Student Services as soon as possible.

Email Policy:

From Students email policy: Faculty will determine how electronic forms of communication (e.g., email, Brightspace/D2L course announcements, chats and message boards) will be used in their classes, and will specify their requirements in the course syllabus. This official student electronic communications policy will ensure that all students are able to comply with electronic-based course requirements specified by faculty. Faculty can therefore make the assumption that students' official email and Brightspace/D2L accounts are being

accessed and they can use email, course announcements, chats and message boards for their classes accordingly.

Student Educational Records:

All records related to this course are confidential and will not be shared with anyone, including parents, without a signed, written release. If you wish to have information from your records shared with others, you must provide written request/authorization to the office/department. Before giving such authorization, you should understand the purpose of the release and to whom and for how long the information is authorized for release.

Students have the right to access their educational records by appointment. This information is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). For more information contact the Dean of Students office at 994-2826.

