

## Course Syllabus

*"The idea is to write it so that people hear it and it slides through the brain and goes straight to the heart". – Maya Angelou*

*"By definition, remarkable things get remarked upon." — Seth Godin*

*"Content is the atomic particle of all digital marketing." — Rebecca Lieb*

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." —Margaret Mead*

*"To me a lush carpet of pine needles or spongy grass is more welcome than the most luxurious Persian rug."—Helen Keller*

*"What is the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on?" — Henry David Thoreau*

*"You cannot protect the environment unless you empower people, you inform them, and you help them understand that these resources are their own, that they must protect them." —Wangari Maathai*

*"I shouldn't be up here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean. Yet, you all come to us young people for hope. How dare you?" – Greta Thunberg*

*"Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect."-Chief Seattle, Duwamish*

### **Course Information:**

Course Title: Media and Climate Change

Course Number and Section: (GEOG 30616/70516)

Semester: **Spring 2024**

Course Meeting Days/Times: Tuesdays 11:30-2:20pm

Location: North Building Room 1022

Instructor Name: Brian M. Kateman

Office Hours: 2:30-3:30pm; *by appointment*

**Hunter** Email: Brian.Kateman@hunter.cuny.edu

### Course Description:

*This course focuses on the intersections between contemporary environmental issues, communication and media systems, culture and social change. We will explore the unique contributions that perspectives from communication and media theory can bring to the study of "the environment" and "the natural world". We will also consider how these perspectives can inform actionable practices that aim to bolster long-term global environmental sustainability. Case studies will cover a diverse set of environmental*

topics, including climate change, environmental justice, the global industrial food system, public understandings of scientific risk, human-animal relations, and environmental media and journalism. Course materials will include interdisciplinary readings, drawn not only from communication and media studies, but also environmental studies, geography, sociology, the natural sciences and other fields. There will also be several required films, podcasts, and other multimedia materials. You will be asked to read challenging texts, engage in class discussions and exercises, reflect on a variety of media clips, and think critically about the perspectives brought into conversations by your peers. Additionally, you will practice putting what we learn into practice. Discover principles of persuasion and influence, and tips on what to avoid in this fast-changing Web 2.0 world. Become conversant in leveraging social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok), paid online advertising platforms (e.g. Google Adwords), website design (e.g. Squarespace), email management (e.g. MailMerge), newsletters, (e.g. MailChimp), public relations, op-eds, podcasts, and more, and learn how each can be used to advance sustainability.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- Articulate the landscape of environmental dilemmas that challenge society at local and global scales.
- Critically analyze the role of media and communication in shaping public attitudes, values and behaviors related to human interaction with the natural world.
- Gain an understanding of the interdisciplinary fields of research that investigate media and the environment.
- Reflect upon the opportunities and obstacles that characterize social movements that work to encourage environmental social change.
- Develop competencies for engaging in communication research, analysis and action that promote long-term environmental sustainability.

**Textbook & Materials**

The required textbook is *Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere* (6th EDITION or older) by Robert Cox and Phaedra C. Pezzullo (Sage 2021). The book can be purchased online. Additional readings and multimedia materials (see Appendix A) will be assigned on Blackboard each week.

**Topics and Assignments (Major Topics/themes and readings and assignments that are due each week.)**

Unit Number and Title	Readings/Resources	Learning Activities
Unit 1/ <b>DEFINING ENVIRONMENTAL</b>	Chapter 1 of Textbook	Assignment 1 Principles of Persuasion and Branding +

<p><b>COMMUNICATION</b> <i>(Jan. 30)</i></p>		<p><i>Choose Topic for Project-</i></p>
<p><b>Unit 2/ CONTESTED MEANINGS: A BRIEF HISTORY</b></p> <p><i>Environmental Topic for Campaign Due (Feb. 6)</i></p>	<p><i>Chapter 2 of Textbook + Assigned Reading</i></p>	<p><i>Assignment 2 Op-ed Writing-</i></p>
<p><b>Unit 3/ SYMBOLIC CONSTRUCTIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENT</b> <i>(Feb. 13)</i></p>	<p><i>Chapter 2 of Textbook + Assigned Reading</i></p>	<p><i>Assignment 3 – Mail Merge And Public Relations</i></p>
<p><b>Unit 4/ ENVIRONMENTAL MEDIA AND SUSTAINABILITY</b> <i>(Feb. 20)</i></p>	<p><i>Chapter 4 of Textbook + Assigned Reading</i></p>	<p><i>Assignment 4 – Branding and Podcasts</i></p>
<p><b>Unit 5/ ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS</b> <i>(Feb. 27)</i></p>	<p><i>Chapter 5 of Textbook + Assigned Reading</i></p>	<p><i>Assignment 5 – Paid Online Advertising</i></p>
<p><b>Unit 6/ DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZING</b>  <i>(March 5)</i></p>	<p><i>Chapter 6 of Textbook + Assigned Reading</i></p>	<p><i>Assignment 6 – Social Media and Events</i></p>
<p><b>MIDTERM</b> <i>(Mar 12)</i></p>		
<p><b>Unit 7/ VISUAL</b></p>	<p><i>Assigned Reading</i></p>	<p><i>Assignment 7 – Book Writing</i></p>

<b>ADVOCACY</b>  <i>Midterm Review Mar 19)</i>		<i>and Publishing</i>
<i>Unit 8/</i> <b>ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND CLIMATE JUSTICE MOVEMENTS</b> <i>(Mar 26)</i>	<i>Assigned Reading</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Unit 9/</i> <b>CLIMATE JOURNALISM</b> <i>(Apr. 2)</i>	<i>Assigned Reading</i>	<i>Assignment 9 – Articles</i>
<i>Unit 10/</i> <b>NETWORKING</b> <i>(Apr. 9)</i>	<i>Assigned Reading</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Unit 11/</i> <b>FUNDRAISING</b> <i>(Apr. 16)</i>	<i>Assigned Reading</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Unit 12/</i> <b>WEBSITE DESIGN</b> <i>(May 07)</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Assignment 11 – Website Design</i>
<i>Unit 13/</i> <b>FINAL PRESENTATIONS</b> <i>(May 14)</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Final PPT + Presentation</i>

**Grading Policy**

Letter Grade	Out of 100
A	93-100
A-	90-93
B+	87 – 89
B	84 – 86
B-	80– 83

C+	77 – 79
C	73-76
C -	70 – 73
D+	67-70
D	63 66
D-	60 63
F	59 or below

**Assessment:**

The professor reserves the right to adjust points, so as not to negatively impact the scoring system, as needed, due to closures or cancellations of class lecture period or the need to shift to online instruction.

- Attendance (15%) and Participation (15%) – (30% Total)

You are allowed a maximum of one (1) unexcused absences (with the exception of the mid-term and final presentations) before a deduction in your grade. If you miss more than three (3) classes, excused or unexcused, you may fail the class. Please talk to me as early in the semester as possible about excused absences. Consistent tardiness will be treated as unexcused absences. Make-up work will be allowed without penalty for excused absences only. For unexcused absences, late submitted assignments will receive a zero. Consult the Hunter attendance policy for additional details. Readings will be posted on Blackboard and/or disseminated via email and will be discussed at the next subsequent session (see Appendix A). Instructor expects active engagement in class. Participation means actively asking questions and responding to questions and generating group discussion.

- Assignments (20%)

A short assignment will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard and will be due on the Tuesday at 5:00 P.M. before the start of each subsequent session, to be emailed to me with your partner cc'ed (if applicable) at [Brian.kateman@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:Brian.kateman@hunter.cuny.edu). Please include Climate and Media, the HW #, your name and the name of your partner in the subject of the email. It will be graded from 0-10. Unexcused late submissions will not be accepted and will be marked as a zero.

- Exam Midterm (20%)

Five open-ended essay questions, two hours

- Project (30% Total): Project (15%) and Final Presentation (15%)

You and a partner (to be determined by the instructor, if applicable) will choose a specific topic of environmental importance and design a comprehensive communications campaign for it. Topics must be approved by the instructor. You will be graded based on your ability to demonstrate knowledge on the subject matter and communicate it effectively. You will then present on the topic via PowerPoint (or an equivalent presentation tool) for 12 minutes. More details on the project will be provided, and here is the rubric:

Knowledge of environmental problem - 10%

Clear on goals/objectives - 15%

Understands target audience - 10%

Includes at least four high-level tactics (PR, branding, paid online advertising, networking, public speaking, events, documentaries, etc.) for advancing goals/objectives - 20%

Includes detail on how to execute high-level tactics using at least four tools i.e. mail merge and press releases for PR, asking questions at a networking event, tone and personality and colors for branding, etc. - 20%

References at least three persuasion principles. - 10%

Presentation delivery (e.g. overall presence, voice projected, etc.) - 10%

Asked a question of others presenters - 5%

### **Hunter College Policy on Academic Integrity:**

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g. plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

### **Hunter College's Policy on Students with Disabilities:**

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1124 to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance please call (212- 772- 4857)/TTY (212- 650- 3230).

### **Hunter College Policy on Sexual Misconduct**

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College affirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationship. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the

Bill of Rights for Hunter College. Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, on contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444)

All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) of Colleen Barry 5 (colleen.barr7@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

Policy on Sexual Misconduct can be found

at <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/diversityandcompliance/title-ix>

### **Preferred Gender Pronoun**

All people have the right to be addressed and referred to in accordance with their personal identity. In this class, we will have the chance to indicate the name that we prefer to be called and, if we choose, to identify pronouns with which we would like to be addressed. I will do my best to address and refer to all students accordingly and support classmates in doing so as well.

### **Appendix A**

#### Unit 2

Cronon, William. "THE TROUBLE with WILDERNESS (Published 1995)." *The New York*

*Times*, 13 Aug. 1995, [www.nytimes.com/1995/08/13/magazine/the-trouble-with-wilderness.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1995/08/13/magazine/the-trouble-with-wilderness.html).

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Keim, Brandon. "Do Conservation Strategies Need to Be More Compassionate?" *Yale E360*, 4 June 2018, [e360.yale.edu/features/do-conservation-strategies-need-to-be-more-compassionate](http://e360.yale.edu/features/do-conservation-strategies-need-to-be-more-compassionate)

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### Unit 3

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#### Unit 4

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#### Unit 5

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### Unit 6

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### Unit 8

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### Unit 9

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