

**ENV 350H Energy Policy and Environment  
Fall 2022 Course Syllabus  
University of Toronto, School of the Environment**

- Time:** Monday, 6-8 p.m.
- Location:** RW 117
- Office Hours:** Friday, 10 – 11 a.m. or by appointment
- Instructor:** Keith Stewart <[climatekeith@gmail.com](mailto:climatekeith@gmail.com)>
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- Pre-requisite:** Completion of 8.0 FCE including ENV221H1/ENV222H1; or permission of the Undergraduate Associate Director

### **Description**

This course explores the connections between energy and environment policy and politics, including the connections with climate change.

The patterns of energy use of individual countries and of the global system as a whole reflect the accumulation of policy choices and have significant impacts on the environment, locally and globally. Not the least of these impacts is the potential to disrupt the global climate system. Decisions about energy technologies are strongly influenced by social organization, economics and politics.

The first part of the course provides a historical context for the physical, environmental, technological, economic and political aspects of energy systems and energy transitions before exploring the principal policy tools available to decision-makers. The second part examines a range of political and policy approaches to understanding and facilitating an energy transition to address the threat posed by climate change.

### **Learning objectives**

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Explain the social, political, economic and technological context for energy transitions.
2. Identify and describe a range of theoretical approaches to energy and environmental policy-making.
3. Apply the theoretical concepts learned in the course to current policy-making processes.

### **Assignments**

Students need to be able to prepare and submit short essays in PDF, word or equivalent format onto Quercus. Additional detail on each of the assignments will be provided in class.

**Assignment 1: Hope and Public Policy (20%).** Given the historical context and current technology, are you hopeful regarding the possibility of achieving an energy transition? What gives you hope (or makes you less hopeful)? This paper should be grounded in the materials from weeks 2-4, but can also include your personal opinions and experience. It should be between 900 and 1200 words. Due by **midnight on October 14.**

**Assignment 2: Policy approaches (30%).** Choose one of the policy approaches from weeks 6 – 10 and address the following questions with respect to their role in political and policy debates on the energy transition. What interests are represented in this approach? What interests are opposed? What ideas do they focus on? What institutions best serve this combination of interests and ideas? This assignment should be no more than 2000 words and is due by midnight on **November 16**.

**Assignment 3: Major paper (40%):** For the major paper, you will prepare a submission on behalf of a policy actor of your choice in response to the federal government's public consultation on the proposed cap on greenhouse gas emissions from the oil and gas sector (see the *Options* discussion paper from the week 7 readings). That submission will identify how your chosen policy actor's interests are affected by this specific policy proposal within the broader context of the energy transition, and the key ideas that they should seek to advance. You will then answer the relevant questions from the federal government's discussion document in light of the ideas and interests you have identified.

It can be written either in essay format or as a briefing note and should be no more than 2500 words. You will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the concepts studied in the course and an ability to apply them to this topic, as well as an ability to identify and include other relevant research.

A draft of your paper should be posted for peer review by **November 27**. The more complete your draft, the better feedback you can receive from colleagues.

The final essay is due on **December 7** (i.e. two days after the last class).

**Assignment 4: Peer Review (10%).** Students will undertake a peer review of two papers by their colleagues (i.e. the drafts submitted November 27), to be completed by **December 2**.

### **Evaluation criteria:**

**The primary criteria used in evaluating written work are the following:**

1. **Analysis:** Your analysis should display understanding of the topic and, based on that understanding, originality of thought.
2. **Structure:** Your written work should have a clear focus, provided by the research question, and a structure which logically flows from that focus.
3. **Writing style:** Your papers should be written in a clear and unambiguous style which assists, rather than impedes, communication with the reader.
4. **Precision and accuracy:** Precision means saying exactly and specifically what you mean, avoiding ambiguity and vague generalities. Accuracy refers to absence of major factual errors.
5. **Mechanics:** Your work must be completely free of grammatical errors, spelling errors or major factual errors. References can be in any style but the same format must be used consistently and they must be accurate.

### **Late assignments**

Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 2.5%/day (i.e. an assignment 10 days late will lose 25% off of the assigned grade, so a grade of 7.5/10 would become 5/10). If you wish to be granted an extension, please contact the course instructor in advance of the deadline.

### **Required readings**

The two textbooks are available at the bookstore. All of the other required readings are available electronically via Quercus or via the links in the course syllabus. The required text books are:

Andrea Olive (2019). *The Canadian Environment in Political Context: Second Edition*. University of Toronto Press.

Angela V. Carter (2020). *Fossilized: Environmental Policy in Canada's Petro-Provinces*. UBC Press.

Students are also expected to follow the public and media debates on energy and environmental politics and policy in addition to the readings identified below. The course instructor will share relevant news stories and analyses via Quercus.

	Lecture topic	Required reading
Week 1: Sept. 12	Introduction to the politics and policy of energy transitions: Why is it so hard to save the world?	
Week 2: Sept. 19	Technology Pathways to Net-Zero Emissions: Can we do it?	International Energy Agency (2021). <a href="#">Net Zero by 2050: A Roadmap for the Global Energy Sector</a> , Summary for Policymakers (pp. 13 – 27).  Canadian Institute for Climate Choices (2021). <i>Canada's Net Zero Future: Finding our way in the global transition. Summary Report</i> .
Week 3: Sept. 26	Energy transitions in historical perspective: Can the past help us plan for the future?	Podobnik (2006). <i>Global Energy Shifts: Fostering Sustainability in a Turbulent Age</i> , pp. 1-17.  James Meadowcraft (2016). " <a href="#">Let's Get this Transition Moving</a> ", Canadian Public Policy.  National Energy Board (2019). " <a href="#">Canada's Energy Transition: Historical and Future Changes to Energy Systems – Update - An Energy Market Assessment</a> ".
Week 4: Oct. 3	Hope versus optimism in climate policy: Is it too late?	Read the home page, FAQ and at least three of the essays posted on the Rebecca Solnit and Thelma Young Lutunatabua <a href="#">Not Too Late</a> project website.  You can also listen to the related interview with Rebecca Solnit on Episode 46 of the Hot Take podcast: <a href="https://crooked.com/podcast-series/hot-take/">https://crooked.com/podcast-series/hot-take/</a>
No class	Thanksgiving holiday	<i>Work on Assignment 1</i>
Week 5: Oct. 17	The importance of institutions: How does federalism shape the politics and policy of the energy transition in Canada?	Olive, Chapter 2  Carter, Chapter 1.
Week 6: Oct. 24	The state as primary actor: How does traditional regulation work?	Olive, Chapter 3 & 9.  Mark Jaccard (February 2, 2016). " <a href="#">Want an effective climate policy? Heed the evidence</a> ". <i>Policy Options</i> .
Week 7: Oct. 31	Market-driven regulation: Are carbon pricing and disclosure of climate-related financial risk the solution?	Working Group on Carbon Pricing Mechanisms (2016). <a href="#">Working Group on Carbon Pricing Mechanisms: Final Report</a> , pp. 7 – 36.  Kathryn Harrison (July 8, 2019). " <a href="#">The fleeting Canadian harmony over carbon pricing</a> ". <i>Policy Options</i> .

		<p>Mark Carney (29 September 2015). "<a href="#">Breaking the Tragedy of the Horizon – climate change and financial stability.</a>"</p> <p>Environment and Climate Change Canada (July 2022). <a href="#">Options to Cap and Cut Oil and Gas Sector Greenhouse Gas Emissions to Achieve 2030 Goals and Net-Zero by 2050: Discussion Document.</a></p>
No class	Reading Week	
Week 8: Nov. 14	Centering incumbents: What is the role of fossil fuel companies in the energy transition?	<p>Carter, Chapter 2.</p> <p>Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (2021). <a href="#">Vote Energy: An Energy Platform for Canada 2021.</a></p> <p>Suncor (2022). <a href="#">Climate Report 2022</a>, pp 4 – 25.</p>
Week 9: Nov. 21	The rise of the climate movement and supply-side policy: Is 'Keep it in the Ground' a political path forward?	<p>Olive, Chapter 4, pp. 83-92.</p> <p>Bill McKibben (August 3, 2012). "<a href="#">Global Warming's Terrifying New Math</a>". <i>Rolling Stone Magazine</i>.</p> <p>Michael Lazarus and Harro van Asselt (2 August 8, 2018). "<a href="#">Fossil fuel supply and climate policy: exploring the road less taken</a>". <i>Climatic Change</i>. Vol. 150, pp. 1-13.</p> <p>Naomi Klein (2019). "Introduction: We are the Wildfire." <i>On Fire: The Burning Case for a Green New Deal</i>.</p>
Week 10: Nov. 28	Decolonization: What can we learn from Indigenous governance and leadership?	<p>Olive, Chapter 4, pp. 93- 105.</p> <p>JFK Law Corporation (2012). <a href="#">Beaver Lake Cree Nation Amended Statement of Claim.</a></p> <p>Indigenous Climate Action (2021). <a href="#">Decolonizing Climate Policy in Canada.</a></p> <p>David Suzuki Foundation (2021). <a href="#">What is Land Back?</a></p>
Week 11: Dec. 5	Backlash to the energy transition: How to respond to petro-nationalism?	<p>Gunster et al. (2021). "<a href="#">Challenging Petro-Nationalism: Another Canada Is Possible?</a>" <i>Journal of Canadian Studies</i>.</p> <p>Review <a href="#">Energy Citizens</a> website.</p> <p>Carter, chapter 4.</p>

## **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

1. Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
2. Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
3. Making up sources or facts.
4. Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

1. Using or possessing unauthorized aids.

2. Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test.
3. Misrepresenting your identity.

In academic work:

1. Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
2. Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see <https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/>).

#### **USE OF PLAGIARISM DETECTION TOOL**

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

#### **ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility: if you require accommodations for a disability, or have any other accessibility concerns about the course, please contact [Accessibility Services](#) as soon as possible.

#### **ADDITIONAL SERVICES and SUPPORT**

The following are some important links to help you with academic and/or technical service and support

- General student services and resources at [Student Life](#)
- Full library service through [University of Toronto Libraries](#)
- Resources on conducting online research through [University Libraries Research](#)