

## Energy, Climate Change, and Society

**Instructor:** Fedor A. Dokshin, PhD

**Class:** LEC0101: Mon, 10am to 12pm

Location: FE 41

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**Office:** Room 372 at Sociology Dept.  
725 Spadina Ave, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor

**Class website:** <https://q.utoronto.ca>

**Office Hours:** TBA

### Course Description and Aims

This course examines how social life is inextricably linked with the energy system, a fact made especially salient by the climate crisis. We will spend the first part of the semester on fossil fuels. Where does the energy we all use come from and what economic, cultural, and political factors contribute to the entrenchment of fossil fuels in our energy mix? We'll then consider the potential for a rapid energy transition away from fossil fuels and to renewable sources. Finally, we will consider the immense social dislocation that will accompany an energy transition and discuss issues of energy and environmental justice.

### Prerequisite

The prerequisite to take this course is 1.0 SOC FCE at the 300+ level. Students without the prerequisite can be removed at any time discovered, and without notice.

### Learning Components and Course Requirements

#### Readings:

Each week (except during test weeks) you are required to complete assigned readings in advance of the week's seminar. All readings will be available on Quercus.

#### Seminar discussions:

In our weekly seminars we will discuss the week's reading and related topics. Students will take turns leading discussion of the reading. **Responsibility of being aware of what the professor says in seminars (including administrative announcements) rests with the student.**

#### Discussion leadership:

Each student in the class will be **required to lead the discussion of one article**. A sign-up sheet will be circulated in the first week of class.

Within each week's reading list are one or more articles marked with three asterisks (\*\*\*) . During each discussion session, (beginning with Week 2) a student will lead the class discussion of one of these articles. You should prepare (1) a short presentation (**no longer than 15 minutes**) and (2) a series of questions for the class. You must use PowerPoint or another presentation software to prepare slides for your presentation. As you create your presentation, focus on the following questions:

- What is the research question? Is the contribution primarily empirical or theoretical? What are the key debates that the article is engaging?

- Describe the data (if applicable). What are the strengths and limitations of the data?
- What methods did the author(s) use? What are the strengths and limitations?
- Are there any parts of the article that you found unclear or confusing?
- What conclusions can we draw from this research? Does it generate any new questions or puzzles?
- Which parts did you find convincing and which parts are you skeptical about?

### Analytic comments:

Students will submit an "analytic comment" about the week's readings each week, by 7pm on the night before class. You are allowed to miss two weeks without penalty (i.e., submit 9 comments during 11 weeks of readings). Your comment should be **no longer than 500 words**. Writing and thinking is improved by an effort at being concise. The word limit will be strictly enforced.

In your comment, you should creatively or critically discuss some aspect(s) of the week's readings. You should focus on key issues, not minor details. For instance, you could comment on the major concepts from the reading: are they clear; what are their implications; do they make sense in the context of the central argument of the paper; etc? You could relate or compare two papers or arguments to each other or critically assess the measurement or conceptualization of key ideas in a study. You could evaluate the generalizability of the argument (does it apply to other, related contexts) or challenge the argument on grounds of external or internal validity. This list is not meant to be exhaustive.

Since this is a 400-level course, I do not provide guidelines for the structure or content of the reading response—feel free to organize your response in any way that makes sense to you. However, each reading response must **go beyond a summary** and include some analysis of the readings or theorize some ideas of your own that was inspired by the reading. I will evaluate responses based on: (1) how well they demonstrate comprehension of the reading's main points and (2) the quality of the analysis. Presentation and clarity of writing will also be considered.

### Weekly "Energy and Society Journal" entries:

Energy issues are always in the news. Throughout this class, you are expected to pay attention to news coverage of energy-related issues. This practice will enrich our class discussions as well as allow you to identify topics of interest for your final paper. To formalize this practice, you are asked to keep an "Energy and Society Journal." At the end of each week, you should list the news items you read/listened to/or watched related to energy and climate change and include a short, informal write-up (no more than 1 page) of your reflections on the material you encountered. You may skip two weeks of entries without penalty (9 of 11 weeks).

### Paper proposal:

The major project for the class is a final paper, which you will submit at the end of the class. To keep on track and for me to provide timely feedback, you will submit a paper proposal at the end of Week 9. The proposal should be about 2 double-spaced pages. It should clearly identify the topic and research question you intend to investigate for the final paper and explain why the question is important and what you expect to find.

### Final paper:

The final paper is due on the Friday of the last week of class. It should be 12-15 pages, double spaced. Detailed information about the paper requirements and a rubric will be disseminated in class.

### In-class participation:

This is a seminar course and active discussion is the main mode of learning. You are expected to come to class prepared and participate actively in discussion.

## Evaluation Components

	Number of occasions	Percent value	Total percent of final mark
<b>Energy and climate journal entries</b>	9	2% each	18%
<b>Analytic comments</b>	9	2% each	18%
<b>Leading discussion</b>	1	10%	10%
<b>Essay proposal</b>	1	12%	12%
<b>Final essay</b>	1	30%	30%
<b>In-class participation</b>	Throughout semester	12%	12%
			100% (total)

## Communication and Quercus

### Email:

Please use your U of T email address to communicate with me about **personal matters**, or to communicate with the TAs. I make every effort to reply to emails within 24 hours, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm. Here are a couple of important points about email communication:

- Please note that the instructor and TA will not respond to emails about issues that are clearly specified in the syllabus (e.g., due dates, office hours times).
- Please use the discussion board to ask questions about course content (see below).
- Address your questions about tutorials to your TA.
- Requests for make-up tests and other accommodations should be sent to the course instructor (Professor Dokshin), not the TA.
- All emails should include the course code SOC202 in the subject line, and be signed with the student's full name and student number.

### Quercus website and discussion board:

Quercus will contain the course syllabus, assignments, discussion board, and course announcements. To clarify **questions** regarding the **syllabus**, **assignments**, as well as **substantive questions about the readings**, please use the designated discussion boards on the Quercus site.

### Office hours:

The instructor will hold online office hours through Zoom (Link will be posted in Quercus calendar).

## Procedures for Late Work

### Documentation:

If you are unable to turn in an assignment for medical reasons, you will need to **email me** the instructor, not the TA, **and also** declare your absence on ACORN. Further, you must present one of the following documents to request an extension or another consideration:

1. **College registrar's letter:**
  - If a **personal or family crisis** prevents you from meeting a deadline, have your college registrar email me directly (it is a good idea anyway to advise your college registrar if a crisis is interfering with your studies).
2. **Letter from Accessibility Services**

- This documentation is useful for ongoing medical issues that require special accommodation.

## Grade Appeals

The instructor and teaching assistants do their best to mark work fairly, consistently, and accurately. Nevertheless, one of us may unintentionally err in our marking. If you believe that your test or lab assignment has been mismarked, please adhere to the following rules

- For basic mathematical errors, simply alert one of the TAs about the error.
- In the case of more substantive appeals, **you must wait at least 24 hours** after receiving your mark. If you wish to appeal, please submit a thorough written explanation to Professor Dokshin of why you think your mark should be altered. If your appeal is deemed appropriate, the entirety of your test/assignment will be re-graded. Please note that upon re-grade your mark may go down, stay the same, or go up. **You have 30 days after receiving a mark to appeal it.**

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement, and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including:
  - working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work;
  - having someone rewrite or add material to your work while "editing";
  - crowdsourcing assignment answers through Facebook or another forum.
- Lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.
- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else's answers.
- Letting someone else look at your answers.
- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including doctor's notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

## Accessibility Needs

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: [disability.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:disability.services@utoronto.ca) or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>.

## Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic & Reading	Assignments Due
1	10-Jan	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Klinenberg, Araos, and Koslov. 2020. "Sociology and the Climate Crisis" <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i></p> <p>Levine. "Regard yourself as a writer."  <a href="https://acpages.gc.cuny.edu/~hlevine/Regard-Yourself-As-A-Writer.pdf">https://acpages.gc.cuny.edu/~hlevine/Regard-Yourself-As-A-Writer.pdf</a></p>	
2	17-Jan	<p><b>Sociology of energy</b></p> <p>Rosa, Machlis, Keating. 1988. "Energy and society." <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i>.</p> <p>Sovacool. 2014. "What are we doing here? Analyzing fifteen years of energy scholarship and proposing a social science research agenda." <i>Energy Research and Social Science</i>.***</p> <p>Shove, Elizabeth, and Gordon Walker. 2014. "What is energy for? Social practice and energy demand." <i>Theory, Culture &amp; Society</i>.***</p>	<p>– Analytic comment by 7pm, Sun</p> <p>– ECCJ entry by 7pm, Fri</p>
3	24-Jan	<p><b>Fossil fuel age</b></p> <p>Smil. <i>Energy and Civilization: A History</i>. Ch.1</p> <p>Yergin. <i>The Prize</i> (Prologue; Ch. 27; Epilogue)</p> <p>Unruh. 2000. "Understanding Carbon Lock-in." <i>Energy Policy</i>.***</p>	<p>– Analytic comment by 7pm, Sun</p> <p>– ECCJ entry by 7pm, Fri</p>
4	31-Jan	<p><b>The nature of power in oil and gas communities</b></p> <p>Bell and York. 2010. "Community Economic Identity: The Coal Industry and Ideology Construction in West Virginia."****</p> <p>Jerolmack. <i>Up to Heaven and Down to Hell</i>. Ch. 4 &amp; 5.</p>	<p>– Analytic comment by 7pm, Sun</p> <p>– ECCJ entry by 7pm, Fri</p>
5	07-Feb	<p><b>Challenging incumbent power</b></p> <p>Selection from <i>Merchants of Doubt</i> by Conway and Oreskes.</p> <p>Davidson. "Exnovation for a Renewable Energy Transition." <i>Nature Energy</i>.***</p> <p>Farrell, McConnell, and Brulle. "Evidence-based strategies to combat scientific misinformation." <i>Nature Climate Change</i>.***</p>	<p>– Analytic comment by 7pm, Sun</p> <p>– ECCJ entry by 7pm, Fri</p>
6	14-Feb	<p><b>Public response to energy industries and technologies</b></p> <p>Boudet. 2019. "Public perceptions of and responses to new energy technologies." <i>Nature Energy</i>.</p> <p>Dokshin. 2016. "Whose backyard and what's at issue? Spatial and ideological dynamics of local opposition to fracking in New York State, 2010 to 2013." <i>American Sociological Review</i>.***</p>	<p>– Analytic comment by 7pm, Sun</p> <p>– ECCJ entry by 7pm, Fri</p>
<b>Reading week—No Class</b>			

Week	Date	Topic & Reading	Assignments Due
7	28-Feb	<p><b>Divestment movement</b></p> <p>Shifeling, Todd and Andrew J. Hoffman. 2019. "Bill McKibben's influence on US climate change discourse: shifting field-level debates through radical flank effects." <i>Organization &amp; Environment</i></p> <p>[TBA]</p>	<p>– Analytic comment by 7pm, Sun</p> <p>– ECCJ entry by 7pm, Fri</p>
8	07-Mar	<p><b>Changing energy behaviors</b></p> <p>Dietz, Stern, and Weber. 2013. "Reducing Carbon-Based Energy Consumption through Changes in Household Behavior." <i>Daedalus</i> 142(1): 78-89.***</p> <p>Gromet, Kunreuther, and Larrick. 2013. "Political ideology affects energy-efficiency attitudes and choices." <i>PNAS</i>.***</p> <p>Wolske, Gilligham and Schultz. 2020. "Peer influence on household energy behaviours." <i>Nature Energy</i>.</p> <p><u>Supplementary:</u></p> <p>Steg, Linda. 2016. "Values, Norms, and Intrinsic Motivation to Act Proenvironmentally." <i>Annual Review of Environment and Resources</i>.</p>	<p>– Analytic comment by 7pm, Sun</p> <p>– ECCJ entry by 7pm, Fri</p>
9	14-Mar	<p><b>Social movements and the energy industry</b></p> <p>Sine and Lee. 2009. "Tilting at windmills? The environmental movement and the emergence of the US wind energy sector." <i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i>. ***</p> <p>Hess, David. 2018. "Energy democracy and social movements: A multi-coalition perspective on the politics of sustainability transitions" <i>Energy Research and Social Science</i>. ***</p>	<p>– Analytic comment by 7pm, Sun</p> <p>– ECCJ entry by 7pm, Fri</p> <p>– Final paper Proposal Due by 7pm, Fri</p>
10	21-Mar	<p><b>Cities</b></p> <p>Bulkeley and Betsill. 2005. "Rethinking sustainable cities: Multilevel governance and the 'urban' politics of climate change." <i>Environmental Politics</i>.***</p> <p>Brandtner. 2021. "Green American City: Civic capacity and the distributed adoption of urban innovations.***</p>	<p>– Analytic comment by 7pm, Sun</p> <p>– ECCJ entry by 7pm, Fri</p>
11	28-Mar	<p><b>Energy justice</b></p> <p>Carley and Konisky. 2020 "The justice and equity implications of the clean energy transition." <i>Nature Energy</i>.</p> <p>Mejia-Montero et al. 2021. "Grounding the energy justice lifecycle framework: An exploration of utility-scale wind power in Oaxaca, Mexico." <i>Energy Research &amp; Social Science</i>.***</p> <p>Stewart. 2021. "All for sun, sun for all: Can community energy help to overcome socioeconomic inequalities in low-carbon technology subsidies?" <i>Energy Policy</i>. ***</p> <p><u>Supplementary:</u></p> <p>Hoicka, Savic, and Campney. 2021. "Reconciliation through renewable energy? A survey of Indigenous communities,</p>	<p>– Analytic comment by 7pm, Sun</p> <p>– ECCJ entry by 7pm, Fri</p>

Week	Date	Topic & Reading	Assignments Due
		involvement, and people's in Canada." <i>Energy Research &amp; Social Science</i> .	
12	04-Apr	<p><b>Political backlash?</b></p> <p>Stokes. 2016. "Electoral backlash against climate policy: A natural experiment on retrospective voting and local resistance to public policy." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i>.***</p> <p>Mayer. 2021. "Development Channelization, Partisanship, and Populism: Possibilities for Rural Renewal in the Death Throes of Coal." <i>Sociological Perspectives</i>.***</p> <p><u>Supplementary:</u></p> <p>Cooper, Kim, and Urpelainen. 2018. "The Broad Impact of a Narrow Conflict: How Natural Resource Windfalls Shape Policy and Politics." <i>The Journal of Politics</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analytic comment by 7pm, Sun</li> <li>- ECCJ entry by 7pm, Fri</li> <li>- Final Essay Due by 7pm, Fri</li> </ul>