CSPH 5121 Planetary Health & Global Climate Change:
A Whole Systems Healing Approach

Fall Semester 2023 (2 credits)

Faculty

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Office Hours	By appointment

My office hours are flexible—feel free to contact me any time by email, by phone, or to schedule an appointment. I am available to help you with problems, but also for discussion, clarification, or further information. If you have a disability that requires accommodation in this course, please see me as soon as possible. I will make appropriate accommodations and will be happy to work with the Disabilities Office.

Course Description

Our personal health, along with the health of the human social systems we inhabit, are inextricably entwined with the wellbeing of local and global environmental systems. Living systems (including social, biological, and environmental) are complex adaptive systems that are self-organizing and give rise to emergent properties within a wider "ecosystemic" context. To effect beneficial and sustainable changes within such systems, leaders must apply (and embody) ecosystemic principles. This course will help students learn how to understand—and to effect sustainable change in—the complex systems in their lives: personal, social, and environmental. Students will explore and develop leadership strategies and skills, using complexity theory as a theoretical framework.

We are facing a multifaceted global/planetary crisis. The evidence is clear that Global Climate Change is primarily driven by human behaviors. Drawing upon the new science of Complex Systems, it is also evident that human social systems (economic, political, and cultural) are impelling us towards a planetary "bifurcation point." Our only hope to avoid multiple systems collapse is to make deep changes in these systems. Rigid, top-down approaches based on linear and mechanistic paradigms are ill-suited to transformative leadership, which facilitates an open-ended process of organic change. This course helps students develop transformative leadership capacities that are applicable within all types of organizations, within a wide variety of roles and positions.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Apply complexity theory as a theoretical framework to explore global changes and ecological trends in various human/environmental interfaces, such as:
    - food production and quality;

    - humans and plants, animals, insects, fungi, and micro-organisms;
    - energy and natural resources use;
    - soil, air, and water quality;
    - exposure to industrial products and by-products;
    - population growth, urbanization, and land/sea use
- Identify the structural components of various human and natural systems through case study methods, direct observation, and deep reflection;
- Analyze the complex dynamics within such systems;
- Develop strategies for optimizing the healthy functioning of systems using the group processes of online and in-person dialogue;
- Compare the observed or likely outcomes of the application of such strategies, ethical concepts and gentle action in the critique process;
- Evaluate the efficacy of various strategies and especially combinations of strategies.
- Incorporate the various strategies developed by the student into a viable transformative leadership framework.

Prerequisites

Junior, senior or graduate student, or instructor consent.

Student Workload

The average student should expect to spend six hours a week to receive an average grade. To receive an A, you most likely will need to spend more time working on class items. On a weekly basis, students can expect two hours of instructional time (e.g. synchronous class, asynchronous discussion, feedback, and communication). They will spend the remainder of time on readings/viewings, two reflections, peer feedback, and their global climate change project. For more information, see the University Policy Library Expected Student Academic Work per Credit policy.

Student Resources

Students looking for resources can find useful links and information in the CSH Student Resources Document. These resources include

- Canvas and Course Technology Help,
- Writing and Research Support,
- Disability Accommodations, and
- Student Mental Health and Stress Management.

Textbooks and Materials

Required

Primary Texts

Briggs, J. & Peat, D. (1999). *Seven Life Lessons of Chaos: Spiritual Wisdom from the Science of Change*. Harper Collins. ISBN 0-06-093073-X.

Jamieson, D. (2014). *Reason in a Dark Time: Why the Struggle Against Climate Change Failed—and What it Means for Our Future. Oxford University Press*. ISBN 978-0-19933766-8.

Meadows, D. (2008). *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*. White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing. ISBN 978-1-60358-055-7.

Morin, E. (2008). *On Complexity*. Hampton Press. ISBN 978-1-57273-801-0.

Orr, D.W. (2016). *Dangerous Years: Climate Change, the Long Emergency, and the Way Forward*. Yale University Press. ISBN 978-0-300-22281-4.

Articles and other resources (see course site)

Robin Wall Kimmerer:

- The Teachings of Plants: Finding Common Ground Between Traditional and Scientific Knowledge
- Mishkos Kenomagwen: The Teachings of Grass
- Conversations Around the Green Fire
- Questions for a Resilient Future
- The Intelligence in All Kinds of Life

Gentle Action Learning Module

Supplemental Materials (see course site)

Kimmerer, R. W. (2013). *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants*. Milkweed Editions. ISBN: 978-1-57131-335-5.

Wallace-Wells, D. (2019). *The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming. Tim Duggan Books*. ISBN: 978-0-525-57670-9 52700.

“Beholding,” Miller.

“Goethean Observation,” Miller.

Gene Sharp website: “198 Methods of Nonviolent Action”

WSH Economics

WSH in Economic Systems; Take Two

WSH Politics

WSH in Political Systems; Take Two

WSH in Groups

WSH in Environmental Systems

Course Delivery

This is a hybrid course meeting 3 times *in-person via Zoom*. Attendance and participation in class are a significant part of the grade; therefore, missing more than

one date will result in an automatic grade drop in the course. The following in-person sessions are mandatory:

Day	Time	Location
Class 1	5:30 - 8:00 PM	via Zoom
Class 2	5:30 - 8:00 PM	via Zoom
Class 3	5:30 - 8:00 PM	via Zoom

Weekly Topics

Week	Topic
Week 1	Complex Systems I
Week 2	**In-Person** ● **Goethean Observation** ● **System Levels** ● **Gentle Action** ● **Gene Sharp**
Week 3	Complex Systems II
Week 4	Complex Systems III
Week 5	Complex Systems IV
Week 6	Complex Systems V
Week 7	**In-Person: Political, Economic & Cultural Systems**
Week 8	Global Climate Change I
Week 9	Global Climate Change II
Week 10	Global Climate Change III
Week 11	Global Climate Change IV
Week 12	Global Climate Change V
Week 13	**In-Person: Sharing Strategies with Class (General Ideas)**
Week 14	Sharing Strategies with Peers (in groups of 2 or 3)
Week 15	Final Project due

Attendance Requirements

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and log in to the course site at least 2 times per week.

General Grading Criteria

Policy on Late Work

For any late assignments, we will require notification in advance and verification of the reason for your lateness, which must be one recognized by University policy as a legitimate excuse. (See Course Policies Section for definitions of legitimate excuses).

Late assignments will result in a reduction in grade of 10% per day including weekends. Repeated unexcused lateness will result in a failing grade for the course.

Assignments

Students are responsible for reading the guidelines provided for each assignment. Assignment due dates can be found in the Syllabus tool in Canvas. The list below indicates percent of grade each item is worth.

Assessment Item	**Points**	**%**
Online Discussions 15 pts x 10 discussions each	150	50
Attendance and Participation (In-Person Classes) 10 pts x 3 classes; 15 pts x 2 reflections; 15 pts x 1 peer feedback	75	25
Global Climate Change Project: Initial Draft	45	15
Global Climate Change Project: Final Draft	30	10
Total	300	**100**

Active participation is expected for all course activities and assignments.

Makeup Exams

Make up exams or substitute assignments are only available for legitimate absences. (See Course Policies Section for definitions of legitimate excuses).

Extra Credit

No extra credit is offered in this course.

APA Format

All written assignments must conform to APA stylistic requirements unless specified by faculty. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, (6th edition) describes correct stylistic formats.

Instructor Feedback

Students will receive feedback on online assignments (with regard to readings and viewings) within one week after submission. Such feedback will be embedded in online conversation threads.

Students will receive feedback on the final paper (first and final drafts) within one week after submission. Such feedback will be embedded in the Google doc of the paper.

Communicating about Grades

Post general questions about the syllabus and assignments to the appropriate forum in your course site. For personal questions, email your instructor directly. You should get a response to your email within 48 hours (Monday – Friday).

Students are encouraged to contact faculty to discuss questions or concerns about their course performance at the earliest possible date.

Evaluation and Grading

The course grade is based upon achievement of course objectives rather than comparison with other students' performance. Instructors for the Bakken Center do not round up numeric grades before applying the grade scale.

The following University standard grade scales will be used for Center courses:

A-F Grade Scale

Grade	Percent
A	93 to 100
A-	90 to <93
B+	87 to <90
B	83 to <87
B-	80 to <83

C+	77 to <80
C	73 to <77
C-	70 to <73
D+	67 to <70
D	60 to <67
F	Below 60

S-N Grade Scale

Grade	**Percent**
S	70-100%
N	Below 70%

University Grading Standards

Grade	Standards
A	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
B	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
C	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect
D	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements
S	Achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better. Achievement required for an S is at the discretion of the instructor but may be no lower than equivalent to a C-
F	(or N) Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed at an unsatisfactory level or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.
I	(Incomplete) Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances (e.g. hospitalization) a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between instructor and student.

See the Grading and Transcripts policy for more information.

University Policies

Students can also view a complete list of university policies in the CSH University Policies document. These policies include

- COVID-19, Face-Coverings, and Vaccination
- Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action,
- Disability Accommodations,
- Mental Health and Stress Management,
- Scholastic Dishonesty, and
- FERPA and Student Privacy.

Course Revision

Each semester this course is revised based on students' feedback and current knowledge of the subject. These changes can include but are not limited to communication strategies, course topics & objectives, instructional materials, assessments, and learning activities.