

University of North Texas
Energy Transitions
PHIL 5900
Fall 2023

Professor: Dr. Terra Schwerin Rowe
Email: terra.rowe@unt.edu
Time: Thurs 3-4
location: ENV 310 M
Office Hours: T/R 2-3
Office: ENV 310 M

I. Rationale and course outline:

This class will be an extension of Energy and Extraction which covered basic methods and key texts in Energy Humanities and Petroculture Studies. This class will focus more specifically on questions of energy transitions: How and why have societies moved from one main energy source to another? How has it affected human cultures, if at all? And given these histories in a context of climate urgency, how should an energy transition be pursued? The course will begin with differing, sometimes conflicting, accounts of energy history; move to current plans for energy transition in North America; and conclude with perspectives on what a just transition would entail.

II. Course Outcomes:

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

- Compare and contrast influential energy histories
- Analyze energy transition proposals
- Articulate the visions and concerns of various perspectives on just energy transitions

III. Format and Procedures:

This class will be an independent study. In weekly meetings with Dr. Rowe the readings will be analyzed and discussed, looking always for connections and gaps in the current scholarship. A final paper will be due during finals week.

V. Course Requirements:

1. Meet to discuss readings with Dr. Rowe once a week. The student should come to meetings having closely read the assigned reading, having identified a main argument or key insights, and with questions prepared for clarification and/or discussion.

2. Course readings:
listed in the syllabus

3. Assignments

Class participation (meetings once per week) **20%**

Midterm paper **30%**

- Write a 800-1200 word review of Mitchell's *Carbon Democracy*

Final paper **50%**

- A 10-20 page, thesis driven paper, building from and synthesizing some of the key contributions offered in the required readings. The essay should include an original thesis statement on the course topic. The argument should be well supported with citations from the text and end with a bibliography. Both citations and bibliography should be in Chicago Style.

V. Grading Policies and Procedures

Grading rubrics will be used to evaluate class participation, assignments, and exam essays.

GRADING SYSTEM:

A	90-100 %
B	80-89 %
C	70-79 %
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

All work is expected to be submitted by the designated due date. Late discussion posts or assignments will be docked 5% for each day late. Late assignments should be posted as soon as they are completed in order to avoid further grade penalty. Prior communication is expected if you will be unable to complete an assignment on time.

* As with attendance, exceptions will only be made for emergency situations. In all cases, timely communication with your instructor is key.

VI. Academic Integrity

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty.

According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

- a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations;
- b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;

- c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university;
- d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or
- e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage.

The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to:

- a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and
- b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

*Note in particular that using ChatGPT or other AI content generator without citing it as a source (whether you are summarizing or quoting directly) constitutes plagiarism. In this course, ChatGPT and other AI content generators will not be counted as a citable source.

VII. Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu>.

VIII. Accommodations for students with disabilities (ADA statement)

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided by the fourth week of class. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://disability.unt.edu>. You may also contact them by phone at (940) 565-4323.

IX. Inclusivity Statement

UNT students represent a variety of backgrounds and perspectives. The professor is committed to providing an atmosphere for learning that respects diversity. Therefore, a portion of the student's participation grade will reflect her/his ability to:

- share their unique experiences, values and beliefs
- be open to the views of others
- honor the uniqueness of their colleagues

- value each other's opinions and communicate in a respectful manner
- keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal nature

X. Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Blackboard online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university's policy in accordance with those mandates at the following link: <http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/ferpa.html>

XI. Succeed at UNT

UNT endeavors to offer you a high-quality education and to provide a supportive environment to help you learn and grown. And, as a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. Here's how to succeed at UNT: Show up. Find Support. Get advised. Be prepared. Get involved. Stay focused. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can achieve success, go <http://success.unt.edu/>.

XII. Student Evaluation of Teaching (SETE)

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The Student Evaluation of Teaching (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available at the end of the semester to provide you with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught.

XIII. Course Schedule

(May change to accommodate public health or other unanticipated events & student needs)

Week / Date	Theme	Readings to be discussed	Assignment due
Week 1 (8/21)	Intros/course overview		
Week 2 (8/28)	On the significance of environmental humanities	• Bonneuil and Fessoz, <i>The Shock of the Anthropocene</i> , Ch 1, 2	
Week 3 (9/4)	On the "unintentional" catastrophe narrative	Bonneuil and Fessoz, Ch 4	

Week 4 (9/11)	On histories of transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White, “Energy and the Evolution of Culture” • Smil, <i>Energy and Civilization</i> (selections) 	
Week 5 (9/18)	On histories of transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitchell, <i>Carbon Democracy</i> 	
Week 6 (9/25)	On histories of transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Carbon Democracy</i> 	
Week 7 (10/2)	On histories of transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malm, <i>Fossil Capital</i> (selections) 	
Week 8 (10/9)			Midterm critical review due
Week 9 (10/16)	Energy transitions in America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nye, <i>Electrifying America</i>, Preface, ch. 4 • Nye, <i>Consuming Power</i>, ch 7 & 9 	
Week 10 (10/23)	US energy transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NYT</i>, “The Clean Energy Future is Arriving Faster Than You Think” • <i>NYT</i>, “How electrification became a major tool for fighting climate change” • “The Long-term strategy of the United States” 	
Week 11 (10/30)	Transitions or additions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York, “Do Alternative Energy Sources Displace Fossil Fuels?” • York and Bell, “Energy transitions or Additions?” • Günel, <i>Spaceship in the Desert</i> (selections) 	

Week 12 (11/6)	Wind & Solar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Howe and Boyer, <i>Energopolitics</i>, Preface, Intro, Conclusion • Rignal, “Solar power, state power and the politics of energy transition in pre-Saharan Morocco” 	
Week 13 (11/13)	Just transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bourzarovski, “Just Transitions: A Political Ecology Critique” • Eaton, “Approaches to Energy Transitions: Carbon pricing, managed decline, and/or green new deal?” 	
11/20	Thanksgiving Break		
Week 14 (11/27)	Energy justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sovacool et al., “Pluralizing energy justice” • Dunlap and Tornel, “Pluralizing energy justice?” 	
Week 15 (12/4)	Climate justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Red Deal</i> • Eaton et al, <i>The End of This World</i> (selections) 	
Dec 10	Finals week	Final paper due 12/12, 11:59pm	

Final Paper

	10 —9 points	8—7 points	6—5 points	4—3 points	2—1 point
The essay is on topic and answers the assigned questions	Excellent		Good		Poor
The student demonstrates the ability to develop a clear, concise, and original thesis statement	The thesis statement is clear, concise, original and compelling	The thesis statement is clear and concise	The thesis statement could use improvement	The thesis statement is unclear, unoriginal, too narrow, or too broad for the assignment	The thesis statement is wholly inadequate or absent
The student demonstrates the ability to support and develop the thesis through reasoned arguments in the body of the paper	The student demonstrates the ability to support and develop the thesis through reasoned arguments in the body of the paper	The thesis statement is supported and developed in the body, but key questions or logical holes remain	The thesis statement is weakly supported or developed	The thesis statement is either not supported or remains undeveloped in the body of the paper	The thesis statement is not supported or developed
The essay demonstrates good organization (with introduction, body, and conclusion)	The essay shows excellent organization	Overall, the essay is well argued and organized, but could use improvement	The organization of the essay could use improvement	The essay is missing one of the following: introduction, body or conclusion	The essay lacks organization and/or is missing key elements
The student demonstrates critical thinking skills	The student demonstrates excellent critical thinking skills	The student demonstrates good critical thinking skills	The student demonstrates adequate critical thinking skills	The student demonstrates weak critical thinking skills	The student demonstrates poor critical thinking skills
The essay is free from grammatical errors	The essay is free from grammatical errors	The essay contains minimal grammatical or spelling errors	The essay contains a few grammatical or spelling errors	The essay contains several grammatical or spelling errors	The essay contains excessive grammatical or spelling errors

The essay demonstrates proper use and citation of sources (Chicago Style, see <i>Chicago Manual of Style</i>) in the body of the paper and follows style guidelines outlined by the proposed journal	The essay demonstrates proper use of sources to support and enhance the argument	The essay could be enhanced either with more summary in the student's own words or more direct quotation	Reference to the work of another person is cited but with incorrect style	The essay contains either too little or too many quotations that are incorrectly cited	The essay contains improper use of quotation and/or does not cite sources properly (recall that plagiarism may result in failing the assignment, the course, or worse)
The argument is well supported by at least 4 scholarly sources	The student has engaged at least 4 scholarly sources	The student has engaged the required number of sources but does not use them effectively to enhance the thesis	The student has engaged the required number of sources but misrepresents some of the author's claims	The student has not done sufficient research and only engages 3 or fewer sources	The essay is written with inadequate research
The Bibliography is properly formatted and sources are properly documented (use <i>Chicago Manual of Style</i>)	Bibliography is properly formatted and sources are properly documented	Bibliography contains 1 or 2 errors in formatting or documentation style	Bibliography contains 3 or 4 errors in formatting or documentation style	Bibliography contains 5 or 6 errors in formatting or documentation style	Bibliography contains excessive errors in formatting or documentation style
Paper is 10-20 pages long (double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, standard 1-1.5" margins)	Paper is 10-20 pages long (give or take 1/2 a page)	Paper is more than 1 page longer or shorter than assigned	Paper is more than 2 pages longer or shorter than assigned	Paper is more than 3 pages longer or shorter than assigned	Paper is excessively long or short