

**NR 5884 Climate Change Science**  
Offered: Spring Semester

**INSTRUCTOR:** Adam J. Kalkstein, Ph.D., [climate@vt.edu](mailto:climate@vt.edu)

**REQUIRED TEXT:** No standard required text. Course contains several readings per week from peer-reviewed publications and/or professional organizations. In addition, each student will choose one of four books options representing only one side of the climate change debate and participate in a “book club” throughout the semester, in which they interact with their classmates to critique the book.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

As average global temperatures continue to rise, it is imperative to not only understand the science behind climate change, but also its potential ramifications and impacts. Using scientific research, this course begins by exploring the why, how, and when behind climate change. Contemporary readings will be used to spark discussion and debate surrounding the potential implications of climate change, with topics ranging from natural disasters to human health. The course will culminate in a “Congressional Briefing” for which students will synthesizing their knowledge of the subject, as well as proposing a political solution.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:**

It is possible to accumulate 250 points in this course:

- Reflections (10 points x 9 weeks = 90 points) – 36%
- Responses (5 points x 9 weeks = 45 points) – 18%
- Book Club (50 points) – 20%
  - Book Club plan = 2 points (group grade)
  - Being a leader = 5 points (individual grade)
  - Being a secretary = 3 points (individual grade)
  - Weekly synopsis = 5 points x 3 = 15 points (group grade)
  - Book review = 15 points (individual grade)
  - Individual contribution grade = 5 points (individual grade)
  - Book review discussion postings = 5 points (individual grade)
- Policy paper (65 points) – 26%