

Noah Mifsud  
CSPW  
Petition

Addressed to: The University of Oregon Senate

## **Make Coursework in Climate Studies a General Graduation Requirement at University of Oregon**

There is [scientific consensus](#) that Earth is experiencing a climate crisis induced by human activity. Humanity's welfare depends on our continued access to natural resources and ability to survive in Earth's environment. We are bound to Earth's fate.

If we as a society don't systematically and aggressively confront climate change we will face dire [consequences](#). The University of Oregon [defines student success](#) in terms of social responsibility. Despite rich and varied course offerings in climate and environmental studies, many Ducks graduate without having received instruction in how the Earth's ecosystem works, not to mention human behaviors that currently threaten it. This needs to change.

**We, the students and faculty, petition the Senate of University of Oregon to make course work in climate studies a requirement for the award of a bachelor's degree from this university.**

By mandating that all students graduate with an understanding of Earth's climate, University of Oregon would not only further its goal of educating socially responsible students, it would lead the way nationally in requiring its students to engage with the realities of climate change.

Our university's [mission statement](#) reads "[w]e are devoted to educating the whole person, and to fostering the next generation of transformational leaders and informed participants in the global community." The biggest issues facing the global community in the coming years lie in the impacts of climate change. Leaders and global participants currently being trained at UO need to understand the causes of climate change, as well as strategies for coping with climate catastrophes and mitigating further deterioration. Preparing all Ducks to face these challenges is critical to UO's mission.

As the first American university to introduce a school-wide climate studies requirement, University of Oregon would establish itself as a leader in environmental education. Equipping every student with knowledge of Earth's climate and ecosystem is guaranteed to foster communication, development and dissemination of ideas about climate change across disciplines. Combining university-wide knowledge of climate concerns with UO's status as a research university will motivate scholarly research concerning threats to our ecosystem and

means of mitigating them. The University of Oregon would serve as a shining example of confronting climate change through education.

To achieve this goal, this petition proposes that [general graduation requirements](#) be amended. A Climate Studies requirement should be added alongside the Global Perspectives and US: Difference, Inequality, Agency requirements. Courses fulfilling this requirement will prepare students to understand and confront climate change using a multidisciplinary approach but could be specialized to incorporate the strengths of individual majors. Furthermore, this petition encourages the university to foster a dialogue with its students and faculty to determine which existing or future climate studies courses provide the foundation for the introduction of this requirement.

Unchecked climate change will [cause](#) droughts, famines, severe weather patterns and eventually make Earth inhospitable. Sign now so students are prepared to confront this future.

Word count: 500