

The World in 2050

Fall 2011

01:450:491:03 (Geographic Problems) and 16:450:605:02 (Geography Seminar)

Instructor: Prof. Åsa K. Rennermalm, email: arennerm@rci.rutgers.edu

Class Time: Tuesday 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM in Lucy Stone Hall B120 (Livingston Campus)

Course Overview: What will the world be like in 2050? Trends in earth's climate system, population, water and other environmental resources point towards a 2050 that will be very different from 2011. But how will these changes play out, and how will they affect people in 2050? Will climate change force population migration towards the poles? Will growing potatoes on the Moon, and mining for minerals on Mars become viable alternatives? In this course, we will examine past and present earth system dynamics, including trends. So too, will we look toward the earth in 2050. Focus will be on earth's biogeophysical systems, but will also include population, technology and other aspects of the human environment.

The course will follow a seminar format with discussions of readings from scientific journal papers, and books by scientist and environmental thinkers. Individual course project work will be integrated in the seminar, and discussed throughout the semester.

Example of textbooks that may be used in this course:

1. Laurence C. Smith (2010) "The World in 2050: Four Forces Shaping Civilization's Northern Future", Dutton Adult.
2. Lester R. Brown (2009) "Plan B 4.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization", W. W. Norton & Company

The final grade will be weighted as follows:

- Attendance and participation in class: 10%
- Quizzes and exams: 35%
- Course project presentations throughout semester: 20%
- Final paper about course project: 35%