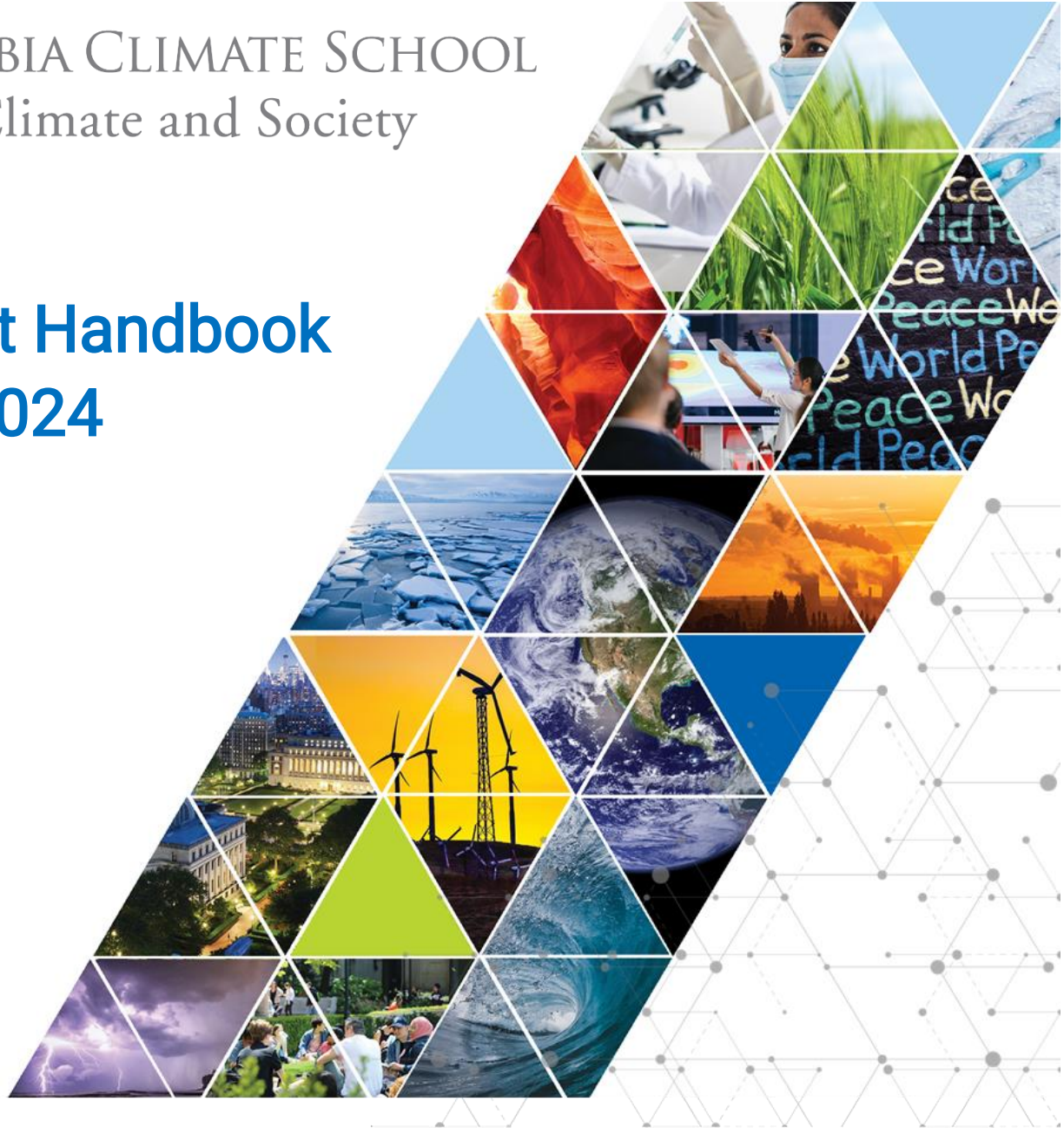


 COLUMBIA CLIMATE SCHOOL
MA in Climate and Society

Student Handbook 2023-2024



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WELCOME

The MA in Climate and Society will prepare students to translate complex scientific information and understand the risks a shifting climate poses as well as how to take advantage of the predictable aspects of natural climate variability. This handbook brings awareness to key policies, practices, resources, and services at the school and the university.

This version of the handbook was published August 2023. The policies here are applicable to Fall 2023 incoming students.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

The C+S program administrators are here to enhance the learning environment and support initiatives to help students achieve their academic and professional goals.

Alfred Ayoub, MBA

Director of Admissions and Marketing

aayoub@climate.columbia.edu

Oversees: Admissions, Financial Aid, Veterans Education Benefits

Caitlin Sarro, MPP

Program Manager

csarro@climate.columbia.edu

Oversees: Careers, Alumni, Cross-program Events

Hanna Chipman, MA

Program Manager

hchipman@climate.columbia.edu

Oversees: Registration, Student Communications, C+S Events

Cari Shimkus, MA

Associate Director of Graduate Programs

cshimkus@climate.columbia.edu

Oversees: Course Planning, Registration, Student Appointments

Gerald Cotiangco, MA

Director of Climate Jobs and Employer Relations

gcotiangco@climate.columbia.edu

Oversees: Career Coaching, Employer Outreach/Relations and Events, Capstone Projects

Natalie Unwin-Kuruner, MPA

Senior Director of Academic Initiatives

natalie@climate.columbia.edu

Oversees: Student Affairs, Alumni Relations, Disability Coordinator

Justine Herrera, MA

Senior Director of Academic Programs

jherrera@climate.columbia.edu

Oversees: Academic Policies, Part-time Program, Partner Programs

Yana Zeltser, MA

Program Manager

yzeltser@climate.columbia.edu

Oversees: Professional Development, Employer Outreach/Relations and Events, Research, Fieldwork & Internship Opportunities

ACADEMICS

Academic Integrity & Community Standards

As members of the Columbia University community, all students are expected to uphold the highest standards of respect, integrity, and civility. These core values are key components of the Columbia University experience and reflect the community's expectations of its students. Students are expected to conduct themselves in an honest, civil, and respectful manner in all aspects of their lives. Students who violate standards of behavior related to academic or behavioral conduct interfere with their ability, and the ability of others, to take advantage of the full complement of university life, and will thus be subject to Dean's Discipline.

Academic misconduct violates the principle of intellectual integrity that is the foundation of our institution. To violate that principle is one of the most serious offenses a student can commit. Faculty and instructors may list specific expectations on a course syllabus.

Examples of Academic Integrity Violations:

- Facilitation of academic dishonesty
- Unauthorized assistance
- Unauthorized collaboration
- Bribery
- Cheating
- Dishonesty
- Failing to safeguard work
- Plagiarism of self
- Unauthorized giving/taking of academic materials
- Sabotage
- Violation(s) of testing conditions

To learn more, visit the [Center for Student Success and Intervention](#) page.

C+S Degree Program

MA in Climate and Society is an interdisciplinary graduate program that trains professionals and academics to understand and address the impacts of climate variability and climate change on society and the environment. Through core classes, electives, and research, students gain knowledge in both climate and social sciences as they relate to climate.

Full-time program

Full-time students complete the program in 3 semesters. Provided below is the timeline for full-time students.

Fall	Spring	Summer
Dynamics of Climate Variability and Change	Quantitative Methods for Climate Applications	Summer Internship: Climate and Society
Climate Change Mitigation	Applications in Climate and Society	Capstone Workshop: Climate and Society
Climate Change Adaptation	Elective #3	
Elective #1	Elective #4	
Elective #2		
1 Residence Unit	1 Residence Unit	Extended residence unit
Fall Minimum: 15 credits	Spring Minimum: 13 credits	Summer Minimum: 6 credits

Part-time program

Students enrolling in the part-time program generally include one or more of the following profiles: people with demonstrated significant work experience in a climate or climate adjacent space; working professionals who can easily transition to climate or a related field where they can apply the program to that profession.

Part-time students complete the program in 5 semesters. Provided below is the suggested timeline for part-time students.

Fall 1	Spring 1	Fall 2	Spring 2	Summer
Climate Change Mitigation	Quantitative Methods for Climate Applications	Climate Change Adaptation	Elective 2	Internship or Capstone

Dynamics of Climate Variability and Change	Applications in Climate and Society	Elective 1	Elective 3	Elective 4
½ Residence units	½ Residence units	½ Residence units	½ Residence units	Extended residence unit
Fall 1 Minimum: 6 credits	Spring 1 Minimum: 7 credits	Fall 2 minimum: 6 credits	Spring 2 minimum: 6 credits	Summer Minimum: 9 credits

Core Courses

Every student in the Climate and Society program follows a sequence of study that includes five core courses and a culminating experience in the form of a summer internship or capstone workshop. These core courses are designed to give our students a common set of skills and a shared professional working knowledge of climate dynamics on regional and global scales, statistical evaluation, risk management, communication, justice and applied research. The list of core courses and their description can be found [here](#).

NOTE TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: Participation in the summer internship course requires the completion of the CPT paperwork. Please refer to the [ISSO](#) for questions regarding CPT.

Electives Courses

A list of popular elective courses can be found [here](#). It should be noted that it is not guaranteed that electives courses are offered every semester or academic year.

Specializations

Specializations provide students with the opportunity to focus their elective courses on a particular area of study and gain tools and knowledge relevant to specific career paths. The two current specializations are: Disaster Risk Management and Climate + Built Environment. More details about the areas of specializations can be found [here](#). (NOTE: Students are not required to declare a specialization)

Students who choose to declare a specialization must do so before the end of the add/drop period in September. Questions about specializations can be sent [here](#).

Enrollment Status (RUs)

The Residence Unit identifies your status as a full-time student. You must register for the following at the start of each corresponding semester:

Full-time student

- Fall Semester: GR0011 Residence Unit - Climate School
- Spring Semester: GR0011 Residence Unit - Climate School
- Summer Semester: GR0015 Extended Residence Unit - Climate School

Part-time student

- Fall Semester 1: GR0012 ½ Residence Unit – Climate School
- Spring Semester 1: GR0012 ½ Residence Unit – Climate School
- Fall Semester 2: GR0012 ½ Residence Unit – Climate School
- Spring Semester 2: GR0012 ½ Residence Unit – Climate School
- Summer Semester: GR0015 Extended Residence Unit - Climate School

****You must register for a Residence Unit and one course before the start of the semester to avoid a late fee.*

Registration

How to Register

Students register for courses through SSOL during your registration appointment times. Registration appointments can be found in the navigation bar on the left-hand side of the screen:

Academic Records for C00XXXXXXX > Reg Appts

Post Add/Drop Registration Adjustments

The last day of add/drop is the last day students can register or remove courses from their schedule directly. After add/drop concludes, if a student needs to drop a course, they can do so using the post add/drop tool in SSOL (follow the link for instructions on how to use the tool—there are three steps!). Students should continue to review the [academic calendar](#) for specific registration change deadlines as well as school registration policies if enrolled in non-C+S courses since timelines vary.

C+S Electives

To complete the program, students need to take a minimum of 12 elective credits in addition to the core course requirements. Students may enroll in any electives across the University, provided they allow for cross-registration, as long as they are taken for a letter grade and at the graduate level (course code of 4000+).

Students can combine varying course credits (e.g., courses ranging from 1 - 4 credits) to meet the 12 required, but should make sure the credits are balanced between the fall and spring semesters. The most common schedule will consist of two three-credit elective courses in the fall semester and two three-credit elective courses in the spring semester, but other combinations will suffice provided students complete the elective requirement by the end of the spring term.

Non-C+S Electives

Elective courses can also be found in [Vergil](#), Columbia's course directory. Courses with a course code of 4000+ are graduate level.

The Cross-Registration rules are dictated by the school that hosts the course, not the student's host school. For example, the Climate School cannot make any rules about C+S students registering for SIPA courses because it is SIPA who makes their own rules for their courses (including which courses are open for cross-registration as well as when they open).

Registration Limits

Credit Limit

Students can take a maximum of 20 credits/semester without getting charged extra tuition.

Students can register for unlimited classes until the end of the add period, at which point full-time students must be at or under 20 credits. Specific dates, including the last day to drop a class can be found in the [academic calendar](#).

International students: Must check with [ISSO](#) to confirm your eligibility to take any online classes.

Waitlists

During registration periods, if a class is full, students can add themselves to a maximum of three waitlists in SSOL. Students must be sure to remove themselves from the waitlist for any courses they are no longer interested in taking by the add/drop deadline. Failure to remove themselves from a waitlist may result in being inadvertently enrolled in a class as the add/drop period closes.

Summer Semester

Timeline

The summer semester is from late May to early August. Details about summer registration and specifics will be announced during the Spring Semester.

Internship & Capstone

During the Summer Semester, students must have an internship in place or register for a capstone project. The internship/capstone courses will run during Summer Term X (May – Aug) but students will be able to enroll in courses during any of the sessions (A, B or X) as long as it works for their schedule.

Extended RU

As a reminder, students should register for an Extended Residence Unit (RU) for the summer term, which allows up to 20 credits without additional tuition costs.

Advising

Faculty advising

Students are assigned a faculty advisor during their first semester. The faculty advisor is a mentor and guide through the degree program. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with degree requirements and track their progress through those requirements.

Program advising

For any questions about course registration, degree requirements, and/or paperwork approvals, contact C+S administrators at [here](#).

Class Day/Graduation and Commencement

Class Day/Graduation

Class Day or Graduation refers to the individual school within the University. Each of Columbia's twenty-one schools, colleges and affiliate institutions hold their own ceremonies to honor the graduating class.

Participating in Class Day

MA in Climate and Society students are eligible to participate in the Climate School Class Day if their degree is expected to be conferred in the following October of the next academic year. More details about Class Day can be found [here](#).

University Commencement

University Commencement is the University-wide ceremony celebrating all of who have received degrees from all Columbia schools and affiliate institutions in a given year. Degrees are symbolically conferred by the University President.

Attending University Commencement is not required to graduate from the University and receive your diploma. University Commencement is typically held in May, in which previous October and February graduates are also invited to participate along with May graduates.

More details about University Commencement can be found [here](#).

Academic Policies

Certain academic policies are shared with the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS). Please refer to the links below for these policies.

[Grading System](#)

[Leaves of Absence, Withdrawals and Reinstatements](#)

[Transcripts and Certification](#)

[Academic Integrity and Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

[Good Standing](#)

[Grievance Policy](#)

Dean's Discipline

University Policies

Immunity Requirements

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Students are responsible for tracking and maintaining their own academic progress and ensuring they have met all University, School, and departmental requirements. The C+S academic administrators will conduct SAP evaluations at the conclusion of each semester terms and sets expectations intended to help students return to satisfactory academic progress and good academic standing. Students not achieving SAP should expect notifications shortly after final grades are submitted and will be required to submit a plan to achieve SAP in the upcoming semester.

When evaluating academic progress, the program reviews:

- Core and Cumulative GPAs (both must be above a 3.0)
- Completion of coursework at the required pace of completion

To maintain SAP, the students in both the full-time and part-time programs in the Climate School are required to keep pace with the registration designated on Page 8 for each semester of the program. The full-time program is to be completed in 3 semesters. The part-time program is to be completed in 5 semesters and their enrollment is purposely structured to ensure they complete the degree in two years.

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

Climate School students are offered a variety of opportunities for internal and external funding to pursue their passions in research as assistants or with faculty advisors as well as enhance their professional skills in the administrative workspace. These opportunities are limited and only open to **full-time students**.

These opportunities include:

Climate and Society Departmental Research Assistant (DRA)

Teaching Assistant (TA)

Internship Program

Collaborative Research Grant

Student Travel Grants

More details about these opportunities can be found [here](#).

Opportunities throughout the year will be shared through the Climate School's Wednesday Weekly newsletter.

Career and professional development

Students have access to a career development officer through individual meetings, workshops and larger professional development opportunities across the programs and schools. Starting from matriculation, the career development officer will begin working with students, taking advantage of all the time necessary to get to know career goals and personal journeys. For more information on career and professional development, contact [Gerald Cotiangco](#), Director of Climate Jobs and Employer Relations.

In addition to career counseling, students also have access to events hosted by the Career Development Office:

Skills Seminars

Careers Reception

All Ivy Environmental and Sustainable Development Career Fair

Details of these events are available [here](#).

STUDENT AFFAIRS

Climate School Student Support Services

Student Support Services is positioned to provide resource referrals, guidance, advocacy, and ongoing, non-clinical support when personal challenges arise. If you are experiencing personal challenges (e.g., family, environment, health, generally struggling) that are impeding your ability to perform at your optimum, you should be in contact with us. Additionally, we can assist in getting students connected to academic support options, as well as accommodation implementation. If you need additional personal support or do not know where to turn, please reach out to [Natalie Unwin-Kuruneri](#), Senior Director of Academic Initiatives, and she will answer your questions and get you connected to the appropriate support staff to assist.

Student Life and Student Support at the University

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (unit of Columbia Health)

Counseling and Psychological Services supports the psychological and emotional well-being of the Columbia community.

[Disability Services](#) (unit of Columbia Health)

Disability Services facilitates equal access for students with disabilities by coordinating accommodations and support services.

[Food Pantry at Columbia](#)

The Food Pantry at Columbia is open to any student within any of the 21 Schools within Columbia University - undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time. Any student who has any level of food insecurity can reach out to us to get a disbursement catered to your individual dietary and household needs.

[Graduate Student Center](#)

Located in 301 Philosophy Hall, the Graduate Student Center offers a bright and comfortable community space where graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and faculty across disciplines and schools may socialize and study. Its features include seating and tables for up to seventy-four people, wireless internet, an acoustic design to reduce background noise, and a video screen displaying Graduate School news and events.

[Gender-Based Misconduct Office](#)

The University recognizes its responsibility to increase awareness of and diligently investigate reports of gender-based discrimination and harassment, prevent its occurrence, support students and others who experience gender-based misconduct, and respond fairly and firmly when students who violate University policy.

[International Students & Scholars Office \(ISSO\)](#)

ISSO assists international students with maintenance of their immigration status, U.S. employment regulations, and provide support with social, cultural, financial, and personal concerns.

[Student Service Center](#)

The Student Service Center is the front-facing office for the University Registrar and Student Financial Services assisting with an array of services for students, faculty, parents, and university administrators and partners.

[University Life](#)

University Life serves as a student life hub for the University and are committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive campus culture where students can thrive in all dimensions of their lives.

Student Leadership Roles

There are opportunities for students to engage in leadership positions that will help shape the student experience at the school-level and/or university level.

Climate School Student Government

Founded in 2023, the Columbia Climate Graduate Council is the student governing body for the Climate School. The council will represent and advocate for the Climate School student body; and aim to connect the Climate School to the overall university community. Applications for council positions and elections will occur at the beginning of the Fall semester.

Climate School Student Senator Seat on the University Senate

The Senate is a university-wide policy-making body representing faculty, researchers, students, administration, administrative staff, librarians, and alumni. The University Senate makes policy on a range of issues that affect the entire University or more than one school. University senators lead policy change at the highest level of the University through their committee service. The Student Senator holds an important role in bringing the constituent voices of Climate School students to the highest levels of the

University administration. Nominations and elections to the Senate will occur at the beginning of the Fall semester.

University Life's Events Council

The University Life Events Council designs events that build community for all students across all schools and campuses, create opportunities for students to connect beyond their schools, and promote inclusion and belonging, sexual respect, University community traditions and the arts. Applications for council positions will be available in the Fall semester.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

[Columbia Health](#)

Visit individual unit pages for locations and office hours

health@columbia.edu

(212) 854-2284

[Columbia Housing](#)

housing@columbia.edu

(212) 854-2946

[Columbia University Libraries](#)

535 West 114th Street

lio@columbia.edu

(212) 854-7309

[Columbia University Information Technology \(CUIT\)](#)

202 Philosophy Hall

askcuit@columbia.edu

(212) 854-1919

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

Lerner Hall, 5th & 8th Floors

Hotline: 212-854-2878

[Disability Services](#)

Wien Hall, Suite 108A

disability@columbia.edu

(212) 854-2388

[Food Pantry at Columbia – Lerner Hall](#)

582 Lerner Hall

thefoodpantry@columbia.edu

[Gender-Based Misconduct Office](#)

800 Watson

GBMO@columbia.edu

(212) 854-1717

[International Students and Scholars Office](#)

524 Riverside Drive, 1st Floor

isso@columbia.edu

(212) 854-3587

[Ombuds Office](#)

660 Schermerhorn

(212) 854-1234

[Public Safety](#)

publicsafety@columbia.edu

(212) 854-5555 (Morningside)

(212) 853-3333 (Manhattanville)

[Sexual Violence Response](#) (Morningside)

Lerner Hall 700

Office: (212) 854-3500

Hotline: (212) 854-4357

[Student Financial Services](#)

205 Kent Hall

sfs@columbia.edu

(212) 854-4400

Student Financial Planning

210 Kent Hall
sfs@columbia.edu
(212) 854-7040

Sustainable Columbia

423 West 120th Street, Suite 7
environment@columbia.edu
(212) 854-1234

University Life

Uris Hall, 8th Floor
universitylife@columbia.edu
(212) 853-1628