



**Empowering Climate Action -
Policy, Communication and Agency: Islands on the Frontline**
SUMMER SCHOOL FOR BACHELOR STUDENTS

21 - 25 July 2025

Online sessions on 7, 9, 11, 14 and 16 July 2025

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
BERLIN • GERMANY

PROGRAMME



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Circle U.
European University Alliance



ONLINE PHASE 07 - 16 JULY 2025

Day 1: MON 07 July 2025	Time	Room	Format	Topic	Lecturer(s)
	10.00 - 11.00	ZOOM		Check-In & Introductions This session will serve as the technical and social check-in for the online part of the Summer School. Students will be introduced to the main teaching tools as well as the core teaching team.	Dr. Hillary Briffa, Lilli Rupprechter, Marcel Robischon, Xiaofeng Guo, Wendy Morel, Wolfgang Deicke, Isabelle Mensching
	11.00 - 12.00	ZOOM		Breakout-Sessions: Meet your fellow students	
	12.00			Break	
	12.30 - 13.30	ZOOM		Introduction of the preparatory challenge for local teams Students will receive written instructions and research policies at their own universities	Dr. Hillary Briffa, Lilli Rupprechter, Wolfgang Deicke, Isabelle Mensching
	13.30 - 14.30	ZOOM		Setting up local teams/ Meeting of mentors all groups are formed on the basis of university, and each has a mentor	Dr. Hillary Briffa, Lilli Rupprechter, Marcel Robischon, Wendy Morel, Wolfgang Deicke, Isabelle Mensching
	14.30 - 16.30		offline	Reading on "Climate Change Science"	
Day 2: WED 09 July 2025	Time		Format	Topic	Lecturer(s)
	10.00 - 11.00	ZOOM	Lecture & Q&A	Introduction to Climate Change Science	Prof. Hermann Lotze-Campen, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research
	11.15 - 12.15	ZOOM	Lecture & Q&A	Introduction to Environmental Psychology	N.N., Universität Wien
	14.00 - 16.00		offline	Reading on "Climate Change Impacts"	
Day 3: FRI 11 July 2025	Time		Format	Topic	Lecturer(s)
	10.00 - 11.00	ZOOM	Lecture	Climate Change Impacts: Urban Heat Islands	Prof. Xiaofeng Guo, UPC
	11.00 - 13.00	ZOOM	online	Work on group presentations	
	14.00 - 15.00		offline	Reading on "Challenges of Climate Policy"	
Day 4: MON 14 July 2025	Time		Format	Topic	Lecturer(s)
	10.00 - 11.50	ZOOM	Lecture & Talk	Challenges of Climate Policy	Lilli Rupprechter, KCL
	12.00 - 13.00			Break	
	13.00 - 14.00	ZOOM	online	Prepare UN simulation in groups	
	14.00 - 15.00	ZOOM	online	Finalize group work on local & university policies	
Day 5: WED 16 July 2025	Time		Format	Topic	Lecturer(s)
	10.00 - 11.00	ZOOM		Group presentations: Round 1 e.g. UCL, HU, AU	
	11.00 - 11.15			Break	
	11.15 - 12.15	ZOOM		Group presentations: Round 2 e.g. UiO, UB, UNIPI	
	12.15 - 12.45			Break	
	12.45 - 13.45	ZOOM		Group presentations: Round 3 e.g. UNIVIE, KCL, UPC	
	14.00 - 15.00	ZOOM	Briefing	Simulation Briefing	Dr. Hillary Briffa, KCL
	15.00 - 15.30	ZOOM		Feedback & Preparation for in-situ phase in Berlin	Prof. Marcel Robischon, Dr. Hillary Briffa, Lilli Rupprechter



BERLIN SUMMER SCHOOL WEEK 21 - 25 JULY 2025

Day 6: MON 21 July 2025	Time	Room	Format	Topic	Lecturer(s)
	10.00 - 10.45	TBA		Registration & Reception Student registration, Meet & Greet, Programs will be handed out, Coffee	HU Circle U. Team
	11.00 - 12.00	TBA		Introduction to the program	HU Circle U. Team
	12.00			<i>LUNCH BREAK</i>	
	13.30 - 15.00	TBA	Lecture	TBA	Prof. Stefano Galatolo, Università di Pisa, tbc
	15.00			<i>BREAK</i>	
	15.15 - 16.30	TBA	Group Work	Group discussion	TBA
	18.00	TBA	Welcome Event	Reception with Keynote & Circle U. Quiz	Dr. Eric Wittersheim, Centre Marc Bloch
Day 7: TUE 22 July 2025	Time	Room	Format	Topic	Lecturer(s)
	09.00 - 10.00	Auditorium	Lecture	Climate Security, Geopolitics and Future International Order	Dr. Maeve Ryan, KCL
	10.15 - 12.00	Auditorium	Seminar	Group Work on International Climate Politics	Dr. Maeve Ryan, KCL
	12.00			<i>LUNCH BREAK</i>	
	13.30 - 15.45	Auditorium	Workshop	Communicating with policy makers	Lilli Rupprechter, KCL
	15.45 - 16.00			<i>BREAK</i>	
	16.00 - 17.30	Auditorium	Briefing	Getting into character: meet your fellow negotiators	Dr. Hillary Briffa, KCL
Day 8: WED 23 July 2025	Time	Room	Format	Topic	Lecturer(s)
	09.00 - 12.00	Auditorium	Simulation	Simulation of UN Climate Negotiations Students will get to explore the necessary speed and level of action that nations must take to address global climate change. Students will play the role of delegates representing countries. In groups, students will work through rounds negotiating amongst themselves and with other teams to propose climate pledges, and we will use software that informs the real UN debates to calculate and analyze the impact of each group's actions as they add up.	Dr. Hillary Briffa, KCL
	12.00			<i>LUNCH BREAK</i>	
	13.30 - 14.30	Auditorium	Simulation	Simulation of UN Climate Negotiations	Dr. Hillary Briffa, KCL
	14.30			<i>BREAK</i>	
	15.00 - 15.45	Auditorium	Debriefing	Debriefing	Dr. Hillary Briffa, KCL
	17.00 - 18.30		OPTIONAL	Visit of the German Parliament* A guided tour "explaining the functions, working methods and composition of Parliament, as well as the history and architecture of the Reichstag Building."	HU Circle U. Team
Day 9: THU 24 July 2025	Time	Room	Format	Topic	Lecturer(s)
	08.00 - 16.30		Excursion	Excursion to Environmental Education Center at Gärten der Welt Berlin Meeting Point: HU Main Building Group Work, Lecture on environmental education and communication	Prof. Marcel Robischon, HU and Team at Environmental Education Center



Day 10: FRI 25 July 2025	Time	Room	Format	Topic	Lecturer(s)
	09.00 - 10.15	Auditorium	Workshop	Climate Agency Workshop (Part I)	Dr. Hillary Briffa and Lilli Ruppchter
	10.30 - 12.00	Auditorium	Workshop	Climate Agency Workshop (Part II)	Wendy Morel, HU
	12.00			<i>LUNCH BREAK</i>	
	13.00 - 14.15	Auditorium	Talk	Joint Action Session Reflections on the summer school and actions one may take - joint session with student-led initiative "Let's be the Change" in Vienna	Prof. Marcel Robischon and participants from <i>Let's be the Change</i>
	14.15 - 15.00	Auditorium	Debriefing	Evaluation, Handing out of Certificates and Transcripts	Circle U. Team
	15.00			<i>Departure</i>	

Programme may be subject to change.

Students are advised to consult their local examination office and/or study advisor regarding course recognition in their study programme.

Course Information

The Summer School “Empowering Climate Action through Policy, Communication and Agency: Islands on the Frontline” is organized as a blended format, with online sessions running on 7,9,11,14 and 16 July 2025 and in situ classes in Berlin from 21– 25 July 2025. During the online part, students will engage with key concepts in climate science and research around climate change. They are going to work in local teams to research climate policies at their respective universities, and present their findings during the final online session. During their stay in Berlin, they are going to work in mixed teams with students from other Circle U. universities. In international and interdisciplinary teams, they prepare for a climate negotiation exercise and experience the process of negotiating complex issues and conflicting interest.

Aside from the academic programme, the Summer School proposes a cultural programme: a welcome event with a keynote and roundtable discussion as well as a subsequent reception. Moreover, students will have the opportunity to visit the German Parliament.

Expected Learning Outcomes

This summer school provides participants with insights into a wide range of topics such as the impact of climate change, climate science and climate policies.

Having completed this course, students:

- demonstrate an understanding of climate change
- can critically assess and understand information
- can work and communicate across disciplines
- have experienced problem-based learning
- have an insight into the psychological processes surrounding climate change understanding, policy and action
- have an ability to think critically about the role of behaviour change within the science-policy-action nexus
- will understand the importance, and need of climate change mitigation actions
- can engage with stakeholders in defining and addressing real-world challenges
- have developed new networks and collaborations

Workload, Assessment and ECTS

The summer school corresponds to 47 face-to-face hours of academic classes (contact hours) and comprises 125 study hours in total (including self-study, reading, group work, tasks etc.).

Attendance and active participation in all sessions is required in order to receive the Circle U. Certificate. Moreover, students’ participation in the summer school will be assessed by a learning portfolio of tasks. The written part of the portfolio will be completed online (submission via HU-Moodle). Additionally, students will have to present their findings in group presentations and participate in an UN negotiation simulation on-site.

The portfolio is formative (assessed on a pass/fail basis). Successful participants will receive a Circle U. Certificate of Completion, Certificate Supplement and Transcript of Records (5 ECTS) issued by Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Students that need a grade will have to contact the teaching team immediately (after being selected to participate) and will have to hand in an essay.

Introducing our Lecturers

Hillary Briffa is a Senior lecturer in National Security Studies at King's College London. She is also a founding member of the Centre for Grand Strategy, where she leads the Climate Change and International Order portfolio.

Stefano Galatolo is Associate Professor at the Department of Mathematics at University of Pisa. He is vice director for the Interdepartmental Center for the study of Complex systems of the University of Pisa, Section Editor for Chaos Solitons and Fractals (Elsevier) and Journal of Fixed Point Theory and Applications (Springer Birkhauser).

Xiaofeng Guo is Professor at the Faculty of Sciences, Université Paris Cité and an expert on energy engineering. He has worked on waste energy recovery for heating and cooling as well as on energy audit methods hybridizing big data with physics.

Hermann Lotze-Campen is an agricultural economist and Head of Research Department 2 "Climate Resilience" at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research. He is also Professor of Sustainable Land Use and Climate Change at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

Wendy Morel is based at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. She has worked in formal education in natural sciences in Mexico for more than 20 years and has developed and facilitated programmes and international teachers training in Education for Sustainable Development during the last ten years.

Marcel Robischon is Professor of Life Sciences at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and an expert on forest and agricultural ecology. He is currently the Academic Director of Circle U's Climate Knowledge Hub.

Lilli Ruppachter is a PhD researcher in the Department of Geography at King's College London. Before joining King's, she spearheaded the development of national climate change communication strategies and researched risk perception of climate change within society at the Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety (AGES) in Vienna.

Maeve Ryan is a Reader in History and Foreign Policy at the Department of War Studies at King's College London, where she co-directs the Centre for Grand Strategy.

Eric Wittersheim is currently a research fellow at Centre Marc Bloch. Dr. Wittersheim is an anthropologist and filmmaker, who conducts research on the genesis and transformations of the state in South Pacific societies. Part of his work is devoted to the production of documentaries that have received numerous awards in ethnographic film festivals.