

<b>Name</b>	Stephen Siperstein
<b>Department</b>	Writing Program
<b>What course are you proposing to collaborate on?</b>	First-Year Seminar: Writing Nature: The Climate Change Controversy – 20735 – WRI 114 – A
<b>In which semester would you be teaching this class?</b>	Fall 2013
<b>Project Title</b>	Collaborating in Controversy: Research and Writing in a Time of Climate Change

### Project Proposal (250–500 words)

In this First Year Seminar writing course students will develop their academic writing and research skills in order to enter into academic, scholarly, and popular conversations about climate change. More specifically, students will be asking and pursuing answers to questions about the social dimensions of climate change, including for instance the role of climate science in our society (Please see course description for a more specific explanation of key questions). Integrating a FLPP into this course would provide students and myself with additional and more integrated opportunities for becoming more confident and interdisciplinary researchers and for addressing the complex, always-shifting, and contentious nature of climate change.

I would envision incorporating multiple library instruction sessions into the course design as well as a significant blogging component, with students keeping their own climate change blogs as well as collaborating on a course blog. I have used blogging in writing courses I have taught in the past, but in this course I would like to work with a reference librarian to possibly develop a class wiki. Furthermore, I have already planned a significant portion of the writing assignments to be geared towards the students' own research projects. Thus, developing a course blog or wiki would provide an ideal forum for students to share their ideas with each other, and hopefully with a wider audience at Stonehill and beyond. I want this course to offer students as many opportunities as possible for sharing and collaborating on their research, and I would be open to working with a librarian to develop as many ways as possible for achieving this.

In this course students will need to become comfortable reading and synthesizing sources from multiple disciplines, not only from the natural sciences, but also the social sciences and the humanities as well. For instance, a student interested in researching why the 2009 Copenhagen conference was a failure might need to read and synthesize sources that deal with political theory, international relations, economics, not to mention scientific sources and how the event was covered by the popular news. Climate change is thus an ideal point of entry for students to practice multi-disciplinary research and to connect their research to their own lived experience. As an instructor, I can offer students my own expertise pertaining to the cultural dimensions of climate change; my own research focuses on the cultural, aesthetic, and literary responses to climate change. However, I am not an expert in the political, economic, and scientific dimensions of climate change. Thus, I expect to be modeling for students how anyone can become a citizen-expert and take part in scholarly conversations by developing one's research and writing skills. Working with a reference librarian would thus be incredibly helpful for my own teaching, especially in my ability to incorporate other disciplinary perspectives into the course design.

Lastly and perhaps most importantly, because perspectives and approaches to thinking about climate change are constantly changing, and because it is often difficult to judge the credibility of sources when it comes to such a contentious issue, in this course students will need to learn the skills necessary for becoming discerning researchers. I expect that having an "integrated librarian" in the course would provide students with an additional level of support as

they navigate what social planners call the “wicked problem” of climate change.