

ENV 2073

Global Warming: Science and Politics of a Contemporary Issue

University of South Florida

Fall 2011

Prof J.A. Cunningham

Homework Assignment #5

Due Thursday, December 1

1. Write a letter to one of your US Senators or to your US Representative. If you are a Florida resident, then your Senators are Bill Nelson and Marco Rubio. Your Representative depends on where you live. Mine is Gus Bilirakis, but yours is probably somebody different. The requirements of the letter are described below.
2. At the top of your letter, put the name and address of the recipient, as is proper for a business letter to a Congressperson. If you do not know how to do this, see me for help.
3. Use an appropriate salutation for the recipient. If you do not know how to do this, see me for help.
4. Explain that you have just completed a semester-long course at the University of South Florida, the topic of which is global warming and climate change, and you are writing now to share your knowledge and opinions on this important topic. Explain that the opinions you are sharing are yours, and do not represent or imply any opinion or position of USF or its administration. You can use these exact words, or you can explain it in your own words, as you wish.
5. Include *one paragraph* on *each* of the following topics.
 - Is the planet currently in a warming trend?
 - To what extent are humans responsible for changes in the climate over the past few decades?
 - On the whole, will future climate change be a good thing or a bad thing for Florida? (or, if you are not from Florida, then for your home state)
 - Is it in the best interests of Florida for the US Congress to pass a law that mandates mitigation of CO₂ emissions in the US?
 - (*optional*) If you said that it *is* in Florida's interests to pass a mitigation bill, then what process do you recommend to achieve the necessary mitigation? (e.g., a carbon tax?)The trick here is to include the most pertinent information that makes a convincing case for your opinion, but does so in just one paragraph. This is certainly possible, but you will have to think about how to convey your ideas to be succinct and convincing simultaneously.

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6. Close your letter appropriately, and sign it. Indicate the city where you reside (for example, I would sign the letter Jeffrey Cunningham, Temple Terrace, Florida). If you don't know how to do this, see me for help.
7. On the last day of class, turn in your letter to me. I will grade it based on the soundness of your arguments, the coherence of your writing, how well you followed instructions, and if you addressed your congressperson appropriately. If you wish, include a stamped, addressed envelope when you turn in your letter. If you do this, then I will mail your letter after I grade it. If you don't wish to mail your letter, then simply don't provide me with a stamped envelope, and then I will know you don't want me to mail it. In that case, I will just grade your letter and then return it to you, or else recycle it. Personally I think we should mail all the letters, but it is up to you – I will not require you to mail your letter if, for some reason, you don't wish.

If you have any questions about the assignment...ask!