



DENIAL101x

Making Sense of Climate Science Denial



Welcome to DENIAL101x

Our course will provide you with the tools and knowledge to help you better understand and respond to climate science denial. DENIAL101x will explain the science surrounding climate change, introduce you to the most common climate myths, identify the techniques used by those myths and give you the opportunity to apply your learning by identifying and responding to climate myths found in today's media.

The University of Queensland in partnership with the Global Change Institute at UQ is offering this course via the edX platform, and we invite you to participate in the online discussions and engage with fellow learners from across the globe.

DENIAL101x recommends basic high school science as a prerequisite.

Learning Goals and Objectives

The purpose of DENIAL101x is to increase understanding of climate science denial and to equip students with the critical thinking skills required to identify and refute climate myths.

Upon successfully completing this course, students will:

- recognise the social and psychological drivers of climate science denial;
- better understand climate change: the evidence that climate change is happening, that humans are causing it and the potential impacts of climate change on the environment and society;
- be able to identify the techniques and fallacies that climate myths employ to distort climate science; and
- effectively debunk climate misinformation.

The DENIAL101x Team

The DENIAL101x team is made up of scientists, researchers, professors and experts from Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada who are passionate about climate science.

In a truly collaborative effort, we have developed lectures and activities to engage students with the science and enable them to respond to climate myths using evidence. We have also conducted and included over 75 interviews with notable experts in climate science to add even more depth to the course. Our team contributes to the Skeptical Science website at skepticalscience.com.

The DENIAL101x team is led by John Cook, the Climate Communication Fellow for the Global Change Institute at The University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia. You can read more about our team by viewing the Contributor tab within edX.

Course Schedule & Features

In order to provide learning experiences for students at a variety of levels, our course contains features that should engage students for approximately 1.5 to 2 hours per week. Each week contains the following elements:

- a series of brief video lectures by experts in fields such as geology, climatology and biology with references to research used to develop lectures;
- activities and interactive tools for application of the information shared in lectures;
- polls and discussion forums to facilitate interaction among students in the course;
- assessments at the end of each week to check learning and apply knowledge gained;
- additional interviews with notable experts in fields related to climate change; and
- links, videos and readings to take the content a step further and increase understanding of climate science denial.

28 APRIL 2015	<p>INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE</p> <p>WEEK 1: UNDERSTANDING THE CLIMATE CONTROVERSY</p>
	<p>During the first week of the course, we introduce the course content, interact with each other and complete an introductory survey. The week continues with an exploration of political consensus, the drivers and psychology of climate science denial and an overview of the controversy surrounding this topic.</p>
5 MAY 2015	<p>WEEK 2: GLOBAL WARMING IS HAPPENING</p>
	<p>In week two, we will look at the indicators of global warming and myths related to temperature and glaciers.</p>
12 MAY 2015	<p>WEEK 3: WE ARE CAUSING GLOBAL WARMING</p>
	<p>Week three focuses on the ways in which humans cause climate change and the myths associated with the greenhouse effect and the rise in carbon dioxide.</p>
19 MAY 2015	<p>WEEK 4: THE PAST TELLS US ABOUT THE FUTURE</p>
	<p>This week looks at the history of climate change in order to model future climate change. We also address myths related to models.</p>
26 MAY 2015	<p>WEEK 5: WE ARE FEELING THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE</p>
	<p>Week five covers climate feedbacks and the impacts of climate change on the environment, society and the weather.</p>
2 JUNE 2015	<p>WEEK 6 AND 7: RESPONDING TO DENIAL</p>
	<p>The final weeks of the course look more closely at the psychology of science denial and debunking techniques. We also complete a peer assessment that asks students to practice debunking strategies on real myths that can be found in today's media.</p>

Earning a Certificate

In order to earn a certificate for this course, you must achieve an overall mark of 75%, and all assignments must be completed by the date the course closes. The following categories make up the assessment for the course:

PARTICIPATION	10%	Each week will contain opportunities for you to share your opinions, interact with other students in the course and respond to topical questions. Your participation in these activities will count toward your final mark in the course.
6 WEEKLY QUIZZES	60%	At the end of each week of content, you will find a series of questions that check your understanding of key terminology or concepts and require you to apply that understanding in new situations and to new problems.
1 PEER ASSESSMENT	30%	At the end of the course, there will be one peer assessment that will ask you to apply what you have learned in the course. In this assessment, you will select a piece of writing found online that contains a myth about climate change. In your writing, you will then debunk that myth using the terminology and techniques presented in earlier weeks. This assignment will be marked by peers using specific guidelines and a rubric.

What We Mean When We Say Denial and Misinformation

In this course, we use the term denial to refer to a process, and we do not use it as a label.

Specifically, we're talking about the psychological process of denial, and in the course we look at the scientific research into what drives people to reject scientific evidence. This allows us to explore how cognitive biases result in the various techniques of science denial. Only then can we develop a framework of the different fallacies appearing in the most common myths about climate change. The biases and the framework we use are discussed in detail within Week 1 of the course.

In this course, we also talk about misinformation, which refers to factually incorrect information. However, in psychology, misinformation does not necessarily imply intent to deceive. This course will examine the psychological processes that can lead to a person genuinely believing misinformation. Misinformation is to be distinguished from disinformation, which is false information created intentionally to deceive people.