

## Introduction

I'm Murray Nabors, Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Missouri Western and a Professor of Biology. I'd like to welcome you to my course on Climate Change. This Course is what's known as a MOOC-a Massive, Open, Online Course. It's available at no charge to Western students, Western Alumni, Friends of the University, and regional high school students.

If you successfully complete the course, you will receive a Certificate of Completion. In the future, we may make the course available for college credit. If so, we'll contact you and let you know the procedure.

So if you are interested in taking the course, fill out the easy application on my website, [MurrayNabors.com](http://MurrayNabors.com). Email it to [mnabors@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:mnabors@missouriwestern.edu) or send it to Murray Nabors, Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Missouri Western State University, 4525 Downs Drive, St Joseph, MO 64507.

Now let's talk a bit about the course itself. Climate change is a topic that's very much in the news nowadays. Words like global warming, the greenhouse effect, and carbon dioxide are becoming part of the common vocabulary.

And there are a couple of big questions. First, is climate change actually occurring? Second, are human activities-such as the burning of fossil fuels-responsible for changes in the climate? If you listen to the news, you already know that the answers to both questions are the subject of intense debate. Some people think climate change is a proven fact and that humans are definitely causing it. On the other side are people who either think that climate change is not occurring or that, if it is occurring, humans are not to blame.

How can there be such diverse opinions of these questions? We'll explore the answer in this course, but the simple version is that climate change and the factors that could influence it are many and complex. Also, the whole issue has become important to business man and women and to politicians, and people in both groups often seize on one piece of information that reinforces their viewpoint rather than trying to understand the whole of it.

By the way, these short lectures are also available for you to read at [MurrayNabors.com](http://MurrayNabors.com).

I look forward to your participation!