On Campus

More Details on New Columbia Climate School

Fall 2021



High-school students participate in a two-week educational program in Vermont hosted by the Columbia Climate School. (Phebe Pierson)

The Columbia Climate School has announced its first degree offering, a master of arts in climate and society that will be administered in partnership with the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, where the program was previously housed. The program trains students to understand the effects of climate change on society and the environment; those beginning the program this fall represent the school's inaugural class.

The Columbia Climate School, which is the first new school established at the University in twenty-five years, is being jointly led by four prominent professors: Alex Halliday, a geochemist who also directs the Earth Institute; Jason Bordoff, a former White House energy adviser who directs SIPA's Center on Global Energy Policy; Ruth

DeFries, a geographer who uses remote sensing to study changes in the planet's habitability; and Maureen Raymo, a marine geologist who studies the earth's climate history and also directs the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory.

In an e-mail regarding their appointments, President Lee C. Bollinger wrote: "I know this collaborative leadership arrangement is somewhat unique, but I am confident that in this case, given these four extraordinary people, this structure will ensure [the school's] success." He noted that "each of these individuals brings unique and complementary areas of expertise to this endeavor; together they are already proving to be an excellent team."

Columbia officials say that the climate school will eventually serve as a hub for interdisciplinary climate research and education across the University, creating new climate-related courses for both undergraduate and graduate students and offering joint degrees in areas such as climate and law, climate and journalism, or climate and the arts.



Guide to school abbreviations

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Columbia Daily Spectator