

Wednesday 9:30 - 11:30

Capitalism vs. the Planet

Facilitator: Gary Wyngarden

This class will be an exploration of the conflict between an economic system that rewards unbridled growth and a planet with finite resources. We will delve into the science of climate change... and examine the opinions of climate change deniers – what are they thinking? We will also review the impacts of the major consequences of climate change – coastal flooding, frequency of extreme weather events, and drought.

The class will also look into global warming's evil twin – ocean acidification -- how higher levels of carbon in the atmosphere result in more acidic oceans with the impact on the oceans' flora and fauna. The role of population growth and globalization will be reviewed from the perspective of their impact on planetary environmental systems. And we will look at what geologists are already calling the Anthropocene Geologic Era – an era of man's impact – with its massive species extinction referred to as The Sixth Extinction.

We will look at climate change from the perspective of major industries such as insurance and banking – and energy. Is reduced economic growth a necessary precursor for the planet to be saved? Are the laws of our economic system in conflict with the laws of nature?

The facilitator believes the class will be exciting rather than depressing. Success stories will be shared and a path forward will be suggested. Class format will encourage open discussion and free exchange of ideas, balancing presentations with discussions.

Books: None required. The course will draw heavily from the best-selling books *This Changes Everything* by Naomi Klein and *The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert as well as authoritative studies from numerous scientific institutions.

Class Type: Presentation, discussion, some videos

Materials Fee: None

Class Limit: 30

Gary Wyngarden has a B.A. in English Literature from the University of Illinois and an MBA from Loyola University in Chicago. Now retired, he spent his entire career in the health care industry which included tenure as CEO of a \$2 billion company. Disenchanted with the corporate world, Gary left to form his own successful company which also permitted time for exploration of a broader and more meaningful world, including facilitating at OLLI.