Stanford



Daniel Zimmer

COLLEGE Lecturer, Civic, Liberal, and Global Education

Curriculum Vitae available Online

Bio

BIO

I am a lecturer with the Civic, Liberal, and Global Education program at Stanford University. My scholarship draws on ecological political theory, the history of political thought, and science and technology studies to explore how humans came to exert power on a planetary scale and the political implications this carries. I teach courses such as “The Science and Politics of the Apocalypse” and “Earth, Space, Bits: Contesting the Nature and Future of Humanity.”

My research explores the connections that bind nuclear weapons, planetary ecological crises, and the rise of artificial intelligence into a broader syndrome. Recent projects have addressed the politics of Earth System science, the relationship between existential risk and biopower, how learning to live with nuclear terror affects the response to global warming, how nuclear and ecological anxieties have shaped understandings of AI risk, the need for greater diversity and pluralism in the field of existential risk studies, and a history of how the human power to destroy all human life reshaped Western political thought during the 20th century.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- COLLEGE Lecturer, Civic, Liberal, and Global Education

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- PhD, Cornell University , Political Thought (2022)
- MA, The University of Chicago , Social Science (2014)
- BA, The New School , Historical Studies (2011)

Research & Scholarship

CURRENT RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTERESTS

I combine political theory, the history of political thought, and science and technology studies to explore the political implications of nuclear weapons, artificial intelligence, and cascading ecological collapse. My research focuses on the new kinds of political fissures that form when the survival of Life on Earth comes to depend on the outcome of human actions.

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- Citizenship in the 21st Century: COLLEGE 102 (Win)
- Preventing Human Extinction: COLLEGE 107 (Spr)
- The Politics of the Apocalypse: POLISCI 32Q (Aut)
- Why College? Your Education and the Good Life: COLLEGE 101 (Aut)

2025-26

- Citizenship in the 21st Century: COLLEGE 102 (Win)
- Preventing Human Extinction: COLLEGE 107 (Spr)
- Why College? Your Education and the Good Life: COLLEGE 101 (Aut)

2024-25

- Citizenship in the 21st Century: COLLEGE 102 (Win)
- Preventing Human Extinction: COLLEGE 107 (Spr)
- Why College? Your Education and the Good Life: COLLEGE 101 (Aut)

2023-24

- Earth, Space, Bits: Debating the Nature and Future of Humanity: STS 132 (Win)
- The Science and Politics of Apocalypse: HISTORY 241F, POLISCI 232, STS 158 (Win)

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Life itself: A new political compass** *MERKUR-DEUTSCHE ZEITSCHRIFT FUR EUROPAISCHES DENKEN*
  Zimmer, D.
  2026; 80 (920): 5-19
- **The Power to Kill Life Itself: Michel Foucault, Biopolitics, and the Political Challenge of Human Extinction** *PERSPECTIVES ON POLITICS*
  Zimmer, D.
  2025
- **“A New Political Compass”**
  Zimmer, D.
  Noema Magazine.
  2025
- **“Today’s AI Threat: More Like Nuclear Winter than Nuclear War”**
  Zimmer, D., Rodehau-Noack, J.
  The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.
  2024
- **“Kainos Anthropos: Existential Precarity and Human Universality in the Earth System Anthropocene”** *New Formations*
  Zimmer, D.
  2022; 107-108: 171-190