

CC/RHTH 507: Future of Creation: Foundations for a Just and Sustainable World

Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and Zygon Center for Religion and Science

Mondays, 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm CT

Physical classroom: LSTC 201

Zoom classroom: [direct link](https://lstc-edu.zoom.us/j/82664466514?pwd=SlRgO2F5aGVkanJlZkdrdVFM5FVBOT09) (<https://lstc-edu.zoom.us/j/82664466514?pwd=SlRgO2F5aGVkanJlZkdrdVFM5FVBOT09>)

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Brightspace course site: [direct link](#)

Spring 2022

Instructors

Dr. Benjamin M. Stewart, bstewart@lstc.edu 773.256.0769

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email is preferred mode of initial contact

Zoom, phone, in-person appointments always available to arrange

Short Description - Informed by contemporary scientific insights, guided by critical religious perspectives, formed by spiritual traditions, and trained in practical public strategies, this course equips members to learn, reflect, and act in response to today's and tomorrow's environmental crises. The course regularly interweaves the perspectives of guest scientists, activists, and theologians to address effective and equitable responses to environmental injustice.

Delivery Mode - in person and online synchronous seminar

Rationale - Why do we offer this course? Which of LSTC's degree program learning outcomes does it address? This course equips members to be public church theologians in dialog with scientists, health-care providers, and activists in engaging environmental injustice and ecological healing for the life of the world. The course cultivates learning toward a number of degree program outcomes, especially in scripture, history and theology, cultural context, and ministry arts and public leadership.

Course Learning Outcomes - What *difference* will this course make to students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and practices? Learners will be able to

- acquire a background on the scientific models for biological evolution, ecology, and climate change, and discuss some examples of these models
- evaluate and synthesize theological reflections on environmental crises and injustice
- understand and engage arguments that are used in climate denial
- construct an appreciative account of scientific methods and experiments through engagement with scientists and their work
- reflect theologically upon questions in ecology and evolutionary biology that impact our understanding of the human person and our world.

Strategies for Learning - How shall we go about achieving these outcomes?

- Dialog with leading scholars of environmental science and ecology and other scientific disciplines that impinge on the area, theologians, biblical scholars, and public policy professionals.
- Sessions with the course instructor and students will be conducted to permit a thorough examination of pastoral issues important for religious communities.

Assessment - How shall we know if we—students and instructors—have been successful in achieving the outcomes?

- Complete all readings prior to class
- Prepare short 2-3 page reflection paper discussing your personal attitudes and prejudices about climate change prior to taking the course. (10% of grade) - due 7 Feb 2022, emailed to instructors
- participate in discussions, ask questions, and reflect opinions based on the topic, personal experience, and readings (20% of grade) - weekly
- 6-8 min presentation (w/ additional 4 min for discussion) on some topic from the readings or lectures that is of interest to you and your experiences in or toward your vocation. The student can discuss a topic that is controversial in the debate, a theme that is recurring in a ministerial context on the topic, problems that are impacted by the discussion, or some other issue related to the topic that is relevant for the student. Include a handout as a resource for your fellow course members. (20% of grade) - presented in class on 25 April or 2 May 2022
- 12-15 page paper on a topic addressed in the course (50% of grade) - due 6 May 2022, emailed to instructors

Required texts	Author	ISBN#
<i>Consecrating Science: Wonder, Knowledge, and the Natural World</i>	Sideris	0520294998
<i>As Long as Grass Grows: The Indigenous Fight for Environmental Justice, from Colonization to Standing Rock</i>	Gilo-Whitaker	0807028363
<i>Ecowomanism: African American Women and Earth-Honoring Faiths</i>	Harris	1626982015
<i>Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation</i>	Moe-Lobeda	1451462670
<i>Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home</i>	Francis	Free online

31 Jan 2022 - Session 1

- Course introductions and orientation

7 Feb 2022 - Session 2

Read for class

- Harris, *Ecowomanism*, Ch 1-4

Seminar guest: Veronica Kyle, Ecowomanist Institute

Due at the beginning of class

- 2-3 page reflection paper discussing your personal attitudes and prejudices about climate change prior to taking the course

14 Feb 2022 - Session 3

Read for class

- Harris, *Ecowomanism*, Ch 5-7, conclusion

21 Feb 2022 - Session 4

Read for class

- Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*
- Optional supplemental reading: Journeying towards Care for Our Common Home: Five Years after Laudato Si' ([free online pdf](#))

Seminar guest: Sr. Dr. Dawn Nothwehr, Catholic Theological Union

28 Feb 2022 - Session 5

Read for class

- Gilio-Whitaker, *As Long as the Grass Grows*, Intro - Ch 4

Seminar guest: Dr. Tanja Paunesku, Northwestern University

7 Mar 2022 - Session 6

Read for class

- Gilio-Whitaker, *As Long as the Grass Grows*, Ch 5 - 8

Seminar Guest: Prof. Dina Gilio-Whitaker (Colville Confederated Tribes), California State University San Marcos

21 Mar 2022 - Session 7**Field trip to Woloschak Laboratory, Northwestern University**

Read for class

- Sideris, *Consecrating Science*, Ch 1-4

28 Mar 2022 - Session 8 - NOTE: 6p dinner tonight (online and in person)

Read for class

- Sideris, *Consecrating Science*, Ch 5-7

4 Apr 2022 - Session 9 - NOTE: 6p dinner tonight (online and in person)

Read for class

- Moe-Lobeda, *Resisting Structural Evil*, front matter - Ch 3

Seminar Guest: George P. Nassos, Nassos & Associates

18 Apr 2022 - Session 10 - NOTE: 6p dinner tonight (online and in person)

Read for class

- Moe-Lobeda, *Resisting Structural Evil*, Ch 4-7

Seminar Guests - Earth Day Panel - cosponsors: Center of Christian-Muslim Engagement for Peace & Justice, Zygon Center for Religion & Science

25 Apr 2022 - Session 11

Read for class

- Moe-Lobeda, *Resisting Structural Evil*, Ch 8- 10 + closing words

Course member presentations in class today

2 May 2022 - Session 12

No assigned reading – time to prepare for class presentation

Course member presentations in class today

ACADEMIC POLICIES AT LSTC

LSTC academic policies may be found in the *2021-2022 Catalog* and in the *2021-2022 LSTC All Students Handbook* and its academic supplements for LSTC's respective degree programs (located on *MyLSTC*, under Student Services, Topics). Please consult these resources for further details about the academic policies below.

Course delivery during Covid-19. All LSTC courses have a remote option, either synchronous by Zoom or asynchronous. Students who are in a high-risk category according to the CDC or who are feeling ill or exhibiting symptoms should attend remotely. Students, instructors, TAs, and guest presenters attending LSTC classes in-person need to be masked, as the classroom is a public space. All classrooms are set up for social distancing of 6 feet separation, and maximum Covid-19 capacities will be observed. The maximum Covid-19 capacity for LSTC classrooms is posted on the outside window of each classroom.

Attendance reports. At the outset of a course, faculty members are required to report students who do not attend the beginning class period. Faculty members also are required to submit reports of a second unexcused absence to the Registrar. The Registrar is required to forward this report to the Financial Aid Office.

Pass/Fail option. The default for grading at LSTC is letter grades. Unless a student is on academic probation, an MA, MAM or MDiv student may request to be granted a Pass/Fail grade (P/F) instead of a letter grade in any course. Students who wish to be evaluated on this basis must complete a form no later than the Monday after the Reading Break through the Registrar's Office. Advanced Studies students are not eligible to take classes Pass/Fail.

Academic honor system. Instructors expect that students will follow guidelines and standards for participation in the classroom and the completion of assignments. Instructors expect that students will present their own original work for evaluation, providing written acknowledgement of sources used in the writing of papers and examinations (e.g., whether hard copy texts or the internet) through footnotes, endnotes, and other kinds of acknowledgement appropriate to the subject being reported. Presenting another's work, from whatever the source (e.g., the Internet, a peer, or hard copy texts) as if it is one's own is called plagiarism, and it is considered a serious offense in the academic community. Students needing help with learning about methods for proper citations are encouraged to consult the latest edition of Kate Turabian's *Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and*

Dissertations and to seek expert personal assistance that is available at the Language Resource and Writing Center (LRWC) or from a research librarian.

Extensions. Being granted an extension in order to complete course requirements after a course has ended is a privilege, not a right. Professors are under no obligation to grant extensions, but may choose instead to assign a grade based on the quantity and quality of work submitted by course deadlines. To request an extension, students must fill out a Petition for Extension form and have it signed by their instructor, advisor, and degree program director. After each term, instructors are required either to assign a grade based on work submitted or to sign a Petition for Extension filled out by the student. Students may negotiate a deadline up until July 15 (for Fall and January-Term courses) or up until November 15 (for Spring and Summer courses), after which the extension (EX) will be recorded as a No Credit (NC) which counts the same as an F in the GPA calculations.

Disability policy and accommodation requests. LSTC is committed to assist students living with a disability to engage in academic and campus life as fully as possible. Accommodations refer to the modifications that are needed to minimize the discriminatory effect of a person's physical, emotional, or learning disability insofar as the provision of the adjustment not cause undue burden on the setting or the institution. It is the responsibility of students with disabilities to identify themselves and request accommodations by contacting the Dean of Student Services, who will begin the process of seeking appropriate accommodations.

Inclusive language. As a diverse community of people preparing for Christian leadership, LSTC acknowledges that language has the power to convey facts, attitudes, and values. Recognizing that we all suffer when exclusive, prejudicial, and/or ethnocentric language is used, LSTC calls on its faculty, staff, and students, in written and spoken communication, to use inclusive language that affirms the full humanity of all people. Resources to assist the LSTC community are available through the Pastor to the Community/Director of Worship and the JKM Library. For questions related to inclusive language in academic writing students are encouraged to consult with their academic advisor or may access resources through the LWRC.