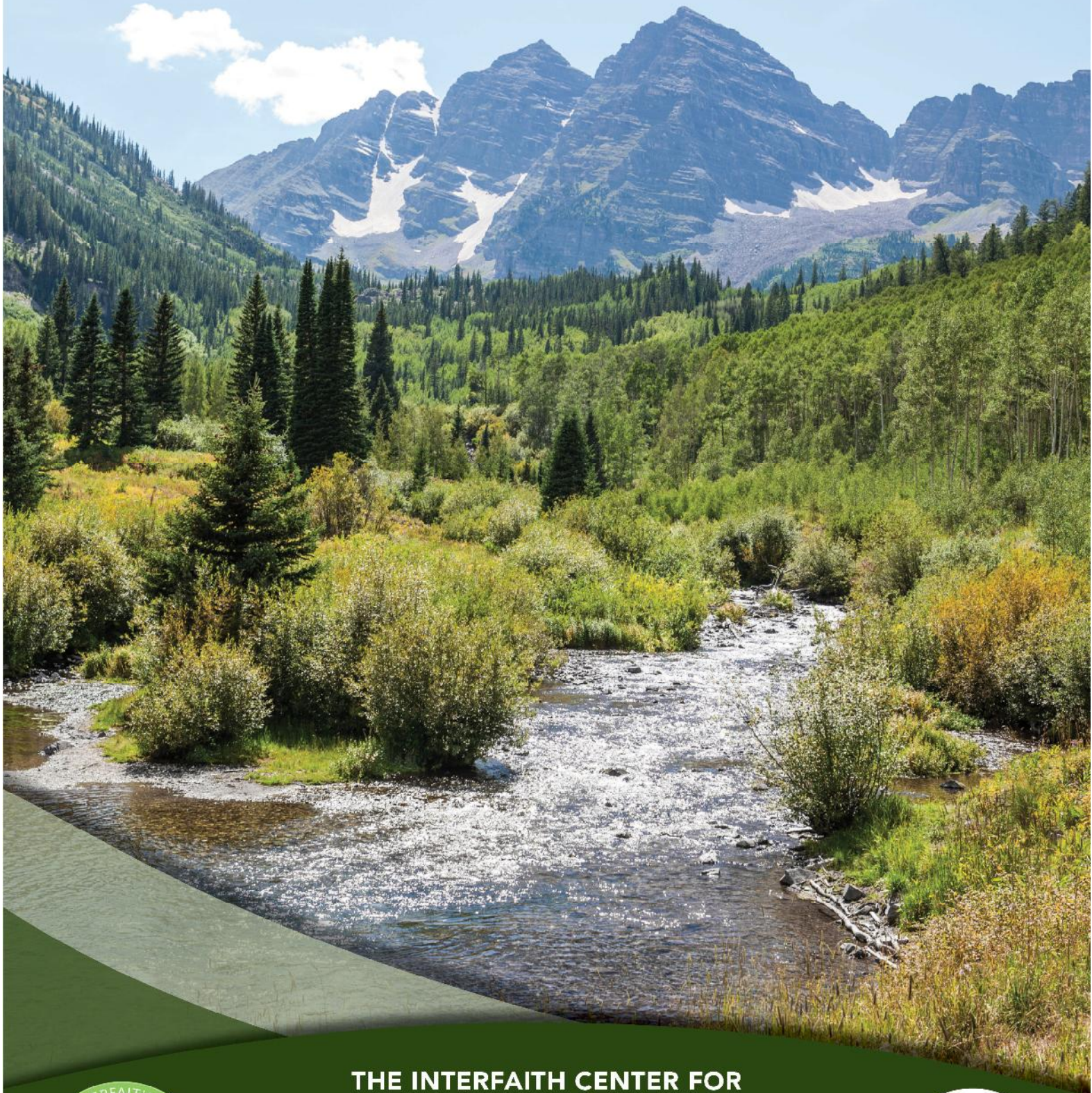


# REPORT ON FAITH AND ECOLOGY COURSES IN NORTH AMERICAN SEMINARIES



**THE INTERFAITH CENTER FOR  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**  
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## Report on Faith and Ecology Courses in North American Seminaries

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## Report Introduction and Summary of Key Findings

The past few years have witnessed a significant growth in the number and diversity of courses on faith and ecology at institutions training seminarians in North America. Research undertaken for this report indicates that there are at least 162 courses that have been offered at 52 seminaries and religious colleges in the United States and Canada<sup>1</sup> in the past number of years, out of more than 231 seminaries investigated.<sup>2</sup> It is encouraging to see religious institutions – in particular seminaries – increasing education about the environmental crisis based on faith teachings.

The release of this report coincides with Pope Francis's Encyclical, *Laudato Si: On Care for our Common Home*, which has significantly increased global awareness of the strong link between faith and ecology. In the Encyclical, Pope Francis states: "All Christian communities have an important role to play in ecological education. It is my hope that our seminaries and houses of formation will provide an education in responsible simplicity of life, in grateful contemplation of God's world, and in concern for the needs of the poor and the protection of the environment."<sup>3</sup> This is the first Papal statement that comments on seminary education and the environment. While Pope Francis singles out Christian communities in this particular call to action, the Encyclical itself is addressed to all people. As the Encyclical states, young people are demanding change,<sup>4</sup> and the training of emerging clergy can help catalyze the 'ecological conversion' for which the Pope is calling. The encyclical calls for attention to a broad spectrum of environmental issues including climate change.

A 2014 survey by the Public Religion Research Institute and the American Academy of Religion found that "most Americans who attend religious services at least once or twice a month hear little from their clergy leaders about the issue of climate change. Just over one-third of Americans say their clergy leaders speak about climate change often (11%) or sometimes (25%). More than 6-in-10 Americans say their clergy leaders rarely (29%) or never (33%) reference climate change."

The survey also found a correlation between clergy speaking about climate change and congregants who believe that climate change is occurring and human caused: "Americans who say their clergy leaders speak at least occasionally about climate change are more likely to be climate change believers than Americans who tend not to hear about climate change in church (49% and 36%, respectively). Americans who say their clergy leaders speak at least occasionally about climate change also score higher on the Climate Change Concern Index."<sup>5</sup>

The low incidence of American clergy teaching on climate change, and by extension, environmental issues in general, is reflected in how American citizens view the issue of climate change. According to a recent poll by Yale and George Mason universities, as detailed in the Bloomberg graph below, the vast majority of Americans do not view climate change as a moral or religious issue.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> While this report focuses mainly on North America, it is noteworthy that courses on faith and ecology are also offered at seminaries in Rome, Australia, India, Israel, Italy, New Zealand, and elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> There are 200-250 additional seminaries in North America that were beyond the scope of, or excluded from this study, many of them with low student enrollment.

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 214, online at <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/2105201-laudato-si-inglese.html>

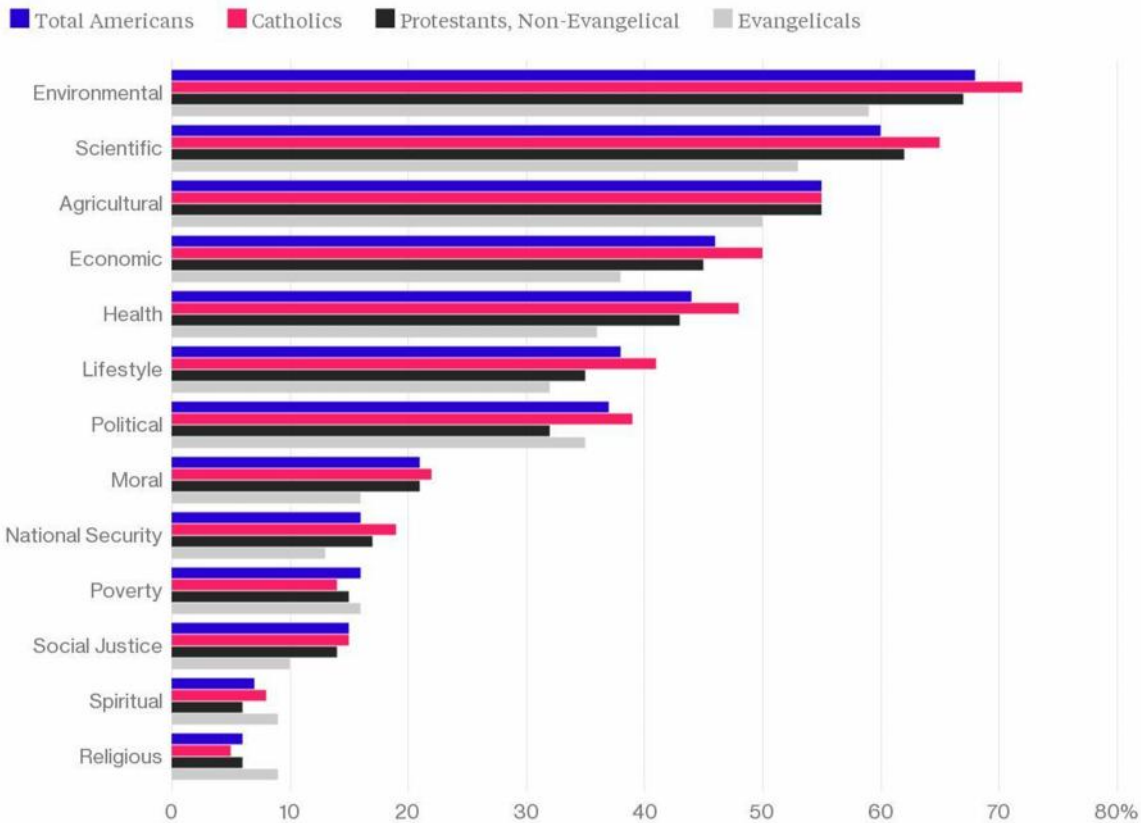
<sup>4</sup> Paragraph 13

<sup>5</sup> "Believers, Sympathizers, and Skeptics: Why Americans are Conflicted about Climate Change, Environmental Policy, and Science," Nov. 21, 2014, online at <http://publicreligion.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/2014-Climate-Change-FINAL1.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> How the Pope Could Turn U.S. Climate Politics Upside Down, Eric Roston, June 12, 2015, Bloomberg Business. The article is online at: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-06-12/how-the-pope-could-turn-u-s-climate-politics-upside-down>

## What Kind of Issue Is Global Warming?

Americans view climate change as an environmental or scientific issue, not a national security or religious one



Source: Yale University and George Mason University

Bloomberg

While many have sought to address climate change and other global environmental challenges, activists have yet to succeed in catalyzing a collective global response commensurate with the challenge. This stems in part from the failure to engage those people with the greatest track record of inspiring behavior change: faith leaders, clergy, and teachers. Twenty-five years ago, a group of prominent scientists wrote an open letter calling for faith communities to support them in addressing climate change: “Problems of such magnitude...must be recognized as having a religious as well as a scientific dimension...we scientists urgently appeal to the world religious community in word and deed.”<sup>7</sup> One of the early responses to this call was the ten Harvard conferences (1996-1998) and ten edited books (1997-2004) examining views of nature in the world’s religions. This resulted in the Forum on Religion and Ecology now at Yale ([www.fore.yale.edu](http://www.fore.yale.edu)).

Much of the world's population is involved with a religious or spiritual community. Therefore, it is imperative that emerging clergy learn how their faith relates to environmental balance in order to aid their congregations in the healing of human society. Seminaries influence the reach and impact of future faith leaders. Many faiths understand the ecological crisis to be a spiritual crisis, and the education of emerging clergy in this area is therefore critically important. The many millions of people who suffer from ecological, political and religious conflicts often turn to their faith for support. Heightening the skills of future and current religious leaders and linking them together with a common moral

<sup>7</sup> Sagan Urges Clerics to Join To Save Globe, Peter Steinfelds, January 16, 1990, The New York Times. The article is online at: <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/01/16/science/sagan-urges-clerics-to-join-to-save-globe.html>

purpose and a greater understanding will inspire action toward a peaceful, just, and sustainable future. Improving emerging clergy's ecological awareness will inspire communities, congregations, and leaders of other sectors in improving human-environment relations.

Seminaries have embarked on a host of greening initiatives on campuses throughout North America. Part of this involves greening of the physical infrastructure of the campus - installing renewable energy generation and composting; sourcing food locally; and expanding and renovating buildings with a LEED green-building certification. Another significant aspect of greening seminaries pertains to the level at which ecology and creation care are integrated into curricula. This is manifested via courses that relate to faith and ecology, as well as integrating ecological components into existing courses on other topics. This report focuses primarily on courses offered that relate to faith and ecology.

In researching this report, The Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development (ICSD) examined more than 231 North American educational institutions that train seminarians to become religious clergy. The institutions surveyed include a broad diversity of faiths and denominations, including Catholic, Evangelical, Southern Baptist, and Jewish, among many others. This report lists over 160 courses that relate to faith and ecology, and highlights 25 seminaries for their integration of environmental theology. These 25 institutions were selected based on the number of courses on faith and ecology offered at each one. The following theological schools represent diverse paths to excellence in faith-based environmental courses, with significant differences in institutions' size, resources, and enrollment.

Despite the rapid growth of such courses in religious education, the percentage of seminaries offering faith and ecology courses remains low. In our sample, 55 of 231 seminaries, divinity schools, and theological schools, or 22% of the sample group, offered courses on faith and ecology.

Furthermore, courses on faith and ecology still represent only a small fraction of overall seminary education at most seminaries. During the multi-year formation period of seminarians, a student who attends one of the 22% of seminaries that offer a course on faith and ecology would likely only take one or two such courses during his or her formation period.

By comparison, a 2009 study by the Auburn Theological Seminary analyzed interfaith exposure and coursework in seminary education. Auburn "found 1208 academic courses about other faiths being offered by the 150 institutions in the study"<sup>8</sup>; over seven times more courses than were found in our report on faith and ecology. Auburn Seminary also had a smaller sample size of seminaries. By comparison, multifaith education is far more prevalent in North American seminaries than faith and ecology education. The Auburn report provided a model for researching and writing this report on seminary education, and we acknowledge Dean Rabbi Justus Baird for his assistance.

It is an aspiration of the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development to help dramatically increase the number of faith and ecology courses through the publication of this report, which will serve as a tool for advocacy and resource circulation. ICSD has also created a free, searchable collection of faith and ecology syllabi and reading lists on its website, which serves as a resource for seminary instructors interested in expanding their teaching on faith and ecology. ICSD also offers consulting services to seminary deans and faculty to facilitate expanded teaching in this area.

ICSD acknowledges Drew Theological School and the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary for their leadership positions in the Green Seminaries Initiative (GSI) and Seminary Stewardship Alliance (SSI), respectively. In addition to being leaders in this field, the GSI and SSI generously shared the syllabi on their website with ICSD in order to enable the expansion of our syllabus collection on faith and ecology.

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<sup>8</sup> "Beyond World Religions: the State of Multifaith Education in American Theological Schools," by Dr. Lucinda Mosher and Rabbi Justus Baird, The Auburn Theological Seminary Center for Multifaith Education report, December 2009

## Report Methodology

This report examines most of the approximately 250 accredited Christian seminaries in North America listed on the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) website (<http://www.ats.edu/>). There are approximately 100 additional Christian seminaries on which no data was collected.<sup>9</sup> In total, over 230 seminaries are included in the research for this report, including the 39 schools listed in the Green Seminaries Initiative (GSI) syllabus project, the 38 Seminary Stewardship Alliance (SSA) member schools and the 50 largest US seminaries by student population. While the primary focus of this report is Christian seminaries, data from three Buddhist, nine Jewish, and two Muslim schools is also included.

Faith and ecology courses have been defined, in the research for this report, as courses that are primarily focused on environmental, ecological, creation-care or nature-based themes and their relation to faith teachings, as evident in the course description. Courses that include ecology as an ancillary theme – as one lecture among ten during a semester-long course, for example – are not included. Some courses with the word 'Nature' in the title, like 'Philosophy of Nature' or 'Theology of Nature,' have not been included in this report if the course description does not indicate an environmental focus, as commonly understood, but rather pertaining to questions of theology or philosophy. Courses that address food ethics and/or animal welfare have been included among the courses listed in the report.

For the purposes of this report, 'seminary education' is broadly defined to include any educational institution that instructs students training to become clergy in their chosen religion. The term 'seminarians' usually refers to all those studying to be clergy, whether in seminaries or at religious colleges or universities. As one Catholic priest, consulted in the writing of this report, noted, "Bishops of Diocese often prefer their seminarians to study in seminaries; religious communities often have their seminarians study at Catholic colleges or universities and have a residence nearby for their own students." Christian seminaries include schools that award a Masters or Doctor of Divinity to their students. In some cases, a Graduate School of Theology is a part of a larger university, the latter of which offers courses on faith and theology that seminarians in the Graduate School do or likely attend. For other religions, the report focuses on institutions that expressly train rabbis, imams, and Buddhist leaders. Christian seminaries of all denominations, including Roman Catholic, Mennonite, Episcopal, Evangelical, and Methodist, were included in the research.

The aforementioned Auburn Theological Seminary Center for Multifaith Education report on multifaith education made a distinction about institutions that train religious leaders: "In a multifaith context, no single word or phrase captures all such institutions, which are variously referred to as seminaries, theological schools, divinity schools, and rabbinical schools. The phrase 'theological school' and the word 'seminary' will be used interchangeably in this report and are intended to refer to institutions that train religious leaders." Such is the case in this report as well.

The authors recognize that gaps exist between published course information and actual course offerings. However, online course catalogs represent a public statement by a seminary regarding their course offerings and serve as an access point for public information. In finding outdated courses, ICSD researchers reached out to seminary contacts to attain updated information as consistently as possible.

Each seminary in this report was contacted directly to attain more information about its faith-based ecology courses. In some cases, ICSD staff conducted in-person and telephone meetings with seminary faculty to ascertain what courses are being offered. In many cases, the in-person, telephone, and email communications led to an expansion and clarification of the course list. However, many requests went unanswered. ICSD intends to update this report for future cycles as courses change and develop every year. To provide updated course and institutional information for future editions, please contact ICSD at the following email address: [info@interfaithsustain.com](mailto:info@interfaithsustain.com).

**It is the goal of this report and its publishers to expand faith-based environmental education in North American seminaries and around the world through information sharing and advocacy. To this end, ICSD has created a searchable database of course syllabi, available on the ICSD website: [www.interfaithsustain.com](http://www.interfaithsustain.com).**

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<sup>9</sup> Estimates vary on the precise number of Christian seminaries in North America. While 300 might be a close approximation, there may be as many as 500. The number of Jewish and Buddhist schools are significantly lower and there are only two Islamic clerical schools currently in North America. The largest Seminary in North America has over 3,000 students; the smallest has fewer than 15.



## Highlighting Twenty-Five Seminaries in Faith and Ecology Curricula

This section highlights twenty-five seminaries in North America that excel in offering courses on faith and ecology. They have been selected for this list based on the number of courses offered in this area.

*Note:* Student population quoted for a seminary includes FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) and non-FTE students.

### List of Highlighted Seminaries

- Drew University Theological School, Madison, NJ
- Yale Divinity School, New Haven, CT
- Methodist Theological School in Ohio, Delaware, OH
- George Fox Evangelical Seminary, Portland, OR
- Wake Forest University School of Divinity, Winston-Salem, NC
- Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA
- Catholic University of America: School of Theology and Religious Studies, Washington, DC
- Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL
- Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, IN
- Boston University School of Theology, Boston, MA
- Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, IL
- Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Wyncote, PA
- Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, TX
- Candler School of Theology, Atlanta, GA
- Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL
- Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis IN
- Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC
- Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA
- Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, PA
- Meadville Lombard Theological School, Chicago, IL
- Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, Los Angeles, CA
- Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC
- Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, MO
- Denver Seminary, Littleton, CO
- Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, DC

### Drew University Theological School, Madison, NJ

**Student Population:** 435

**Denomination:** United Methodist Church

<http://www.drew.edu/theological/>

In addition to the fourteen courses from five different professors on faith-based environmental education, Drew offers a concentration in Ecology and Religion, which is considered a major draw for students. Drew courses have included: "The Theology and Ecology of Common Ground," "Nature, God, and the New Cosmology," "Spiritual Foundations for Sustainable and Ecological Initiatives," and "Religious Identity and Social Action." Dr. Laurel D. Kearns, Associate Professor of Sociology of Religion and Environmental Studies, wrote to ICSD about faith-based environmental education at Drew: "Over the years we have offered courses on Eco-Justice, Eco-Spirituality, Religion and Animals, Environmental Justice, Religion and Climate Change, Salim: An Asian Post-colonial Ecofeminism. Students can do internships at GreenFaith, or supervise ministry with 'green' churches."

Drew Theological students can take Environmental Studies courses at Drew University, resulting in over 90% of graduates taking a graduation pledge of social and environmental responsibility.

As Drew notes about its work in this area, "Faculty and students from the school have been part of the sustainability efforts of the university since the early 1990s, including... an effort to naturalize the campus and plant native species, integrated pest management, socially responsible investing, signing the University President's climate change commitment, and a subsequent 20% reduction of greenhouse emissions related to energy efficiency." Furthermore, Drew Theological Seminary is a leader and host of the Green Seminaries Initiative, which "fosters efforts by theological schools and seminaries to incorporate care for creation into the identity and mission of the institution."

<http://www.greenseminaries.org>.



**Yale Divinity School, New Haven, CT**

**Student Population:** 398

**Denomination:** Multi Denominational

<http://divinity.yale.edu/>

Yale Divinity School has offered 13 courses in religion and ecology, including “Introduction to Religion and Ecology,” “Western Religions and Ecology,” “Christianity and Ecology,” “Christianity and Environmental Ethics,” “East Asian Religions and Ecology,” “South Asian Religions and Ecology,” “Indigenous Religions and Ecology,” “American Indian Religions and Ecology,” “Law, Environment, and Religion: A Communion of Subjects,” “American Environmental History and Values,” “Religion, Ecology, and Cosmology,” “The Worldview of Thomas Berry,” and “Journey of the Universe.” The Divinity School offers a joint degree program in Religion and Ecology with the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. This program is the first of its kind in North America and is a paramount example of the range of ways that seminaries are working with affiliate schools or departments and incorporating environmental agendas into their academic framework.

Yale also hosts conferences on ecological issues through the Forum on Religion and Ecology, which is directed by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim. This is an international and multi-religious forum that has organized some 30 conferences exploring religious world-views and current environmental concerns. “In all world religions we have environmental ethics and profound spiritual resources that can hold people together in the midst of future suffering – the immense challenge of environmental refugees, rising seas, more Katrinas and Sandys,” Dr. Tucker said. The forum on Religion and Ecology also hosts a major website highlighting the resources of the world religions on ecology ([www.fore.yale.edu](http://www.fore.yale.edu)). Since 2013 the Nourish New Haven conference, has become an annual event focusing on the relationship between Yale, the local community and environmental concerns.

**Methodist Theological School in Ohio, Delaware, OH**

**Student Population:** 201

**Denomination:** United Methodist Church

<http://www.mtso.edu/>

The Methodist Theology School in Ohio (MTSO) has offered eight distinct faith-based environmental courses including “Connections in Ecology and Religious Education,” “The Oikos of God: Economy and Ecology in the Global Household,” “Worship, Ecology and Social Justice” and “Resisting Biocide: Environmental Ethics for Discipleship.” They also offered a specialization in Ecology and Social Justice for their Masters of Divinity program. In the description for this specialization, MTSO states:

“Out of love and respect for future generations, religious leaders need to provide those they serve with a theological framework for resisting greed, gluttony and the destruction of resources.”

MTSO has a Sustainability and Land Initiative, which includes Seminary Hill Farm, a certified organic farm that incorporates environmental learning into student life. This farm features heavily in the Ecology and Social Justice specialization. The Sustainability and Land Initiative seeks to further the MTSO aspiration to “prepare and invigorate transformational leaders to engage the church and the world in leadership and service” by creating a “sustainable campus plan which establishes a model for theological education through the cultivation of sustainable teaching and learning communities on our land.”

**George Fox Evangelical Seminary, Portland, OR**

**Student Population:** 358

**Denomination:** Multi Denominational

<http://www.georgefox.edu/seminary/>

George Fox Evangelical Seminary's declared focus is on its students' relationship with God, the Church and the World through holistic evangelical education. George Fox Seminary teaches seven courses in faith-based ecology including two series: “Theology and Stewardship of Creation” and “Eschatology, New Creation, and Communal Ethics.” The George Fox curriculum also includes a concentration in “Christian Earthkeeping,” which has options for multi-day retreats considering Native American land ethics and the relationships between stewardship, global systems, and societal issues

such as sexism, racism, and poverty. Additionally, George Fox employs multiple professors in Ecotheology who link the environmental crisis to theological ideas.

**Wake Forest University School of Divinity, Winston-Salem, NC**

**Student Population:** 116

**Denomination:** Multi Denominational

<http://divinity.wfu.edu/>

Wake Forest's seven courses on faith-based ecology include five that focus on the ecological and spiritual role of food: "Faith, Food Justice, and Local Communities," "Field, Table, Communion: Food and the Work of Ministry," "Thriving Nourishment: Christian Spiritual Practices and Food," "Daily Bread: Food, Faith, Mercy, and Justice," and "Food, Faith, and Health: Navigating the Intersections in Community." The school also offers two environmental specializations for their students in "Sustainability" and "Food and Faith." In conjunction with these classes and academic specializations, Wake Forest hosts the Food, Faith, and Religious Leadership Initiative, preparing "faith leaders and congregations to become change agents in food security, community health, and resilient food economies" via events and conferences throughout the year.

**Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA**

**Student Population:** 3,382

**Denomination:** Multi Denominational

<http://fuller.edu/>

Fuller Theological Seminary has offered six courses integrating ecological ideas into religious teaching, including "Creation Care and the Sabbath Economics." The instructors of these courses also make an effort to integrate ecological teachings into their other classes as "one of the major issues of our times," according to Hak Joon Lee, Professor of Theology and Ethics. Richard Mouw, Professor of Faith and Public Life, notes that the integration of ecology in religious learning is not a matter of "adding courses, but of integrating creation-care concerns throughout the curriculum."

Fuller Theological Seminary is one of the founders of the Blessed Earth Project, which was the progenitor of the Seminary Stewardship Alliance. The school is an active participant in both The Seminary Stewardship Alliance and The Green Seminary Initiative. Fuller supports an active sustainability group that is currently working on a community garden on campus.

**Catholic University of America: School of Theology and Religious Studies, Washington, DC**

**Student Population:** 275

**Denomination:** Roman Catholic

<http://trs.cua.edu/>

The Catholic University of America's School of Theology and Religious Studies has offered five courses by at least three different instructors involving faith-based environmentalism. Courses include "Religion & Ecology," "Ethics and The Environment," "Theology and Ecology," "Francis of Assisi: Prophet of Peace and of Creation" and "Spirituality, Religion and Social Transformation." The latter courses explore Francis of Assisi's pursuit of peace and the preservation of the environment and an examination of ways in which prominent spiritual and religious authors have addressed issues of slavery, global poverty, environmental degradation, and ethnic violence.

**Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL**

**Student Population:** 399

**Denomination:** United Methodist Church

<http://www.garrett.edu/>

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary has offered five courses incorporating ecological teachings into faith-based learning taught by Dr. Timothy Eberhart, Assistant Professor of Theology and Ecology and Director of the Course of Study School. Since Dr. Eberhart joined the faculty at Garrett-Evangelical, the Seminary has joined in an agreement with Methodist Theological School in Ohio to teach curricula that will foster ecologically-minded leaders for the church and the academy.

Garrett-Evangelical has been a leader in environmental education in seminaries by helping to found the Seminary Stewardship Alliance (SSA). “Garrett-Evangelical is committed to integrating ecological perspectives and sustainable practices throughout the curriculum, worship and spiritual life, programming, buildings and grounds, and administrative operations of the Seminary,” President Lallene Rector said in an article on the SSA website. (<http://seminaryalliance.org/>). “It is important to support the preparation of our graduates for effective leadership in the increasingly urgent matters of sustainable living and creation care.”

#### **Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, IN**

**Student Population:** 101

**Denomination:** Mennonite Church USA

<https://www.ambs.edu/>

The Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) has offered four faith-based environmental courses for the Master of Divinity students. Three of these course offerings, “Eco-Justice: A Vision for a Sustainable City,” “Thinking Ethically” and “Creation Care: Theology, Ethics, and Spirituality,” can fulfill requirements for graduation either in Church and Ministry or History, Theology and Ethics. The fourth course, “Spiritual Practices: Water of Life,” “[weaves] together care for creation—specifically the resource of water—with study of biblical texts about water, reflection on the role of water in Christian faith, [and] practice of spiritual and conservation disciplines.”

In September of 2014, AMBS hosted the Rooted and Grounded conference co-sponsored by Blessed Earth’s Seminary Stewardship Alliance and the Institute for Ecological Regeneration of Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center. The conference centered on the idea that “many people are becoming increasingly aware of the intimate connection between the environmental crisis and humanity’s detachment from the land... [And] perceiving the profound link between the (un)health of the land and the inner disorder of our Western society.”

#### **Boston University School of Theology, Boston, MA**

**Student Population:** 307

**Denomination:** United Methodist Church

<http://www.bu.edu/sth/>

At Boston University School of Theology, Dr. John Hart connects social and environmental ethics, liberation theology and ethics, and science and Christianity, working with students both in and out of the classroom.

He teaches four faith-based environmental courses, including “Christian Ecological Ethics and Political Issues” and “Sacred Earth: Indigenous Peoples’ Ecological Traditions” and has worked with native peoples’ spiritual leaders and human rights activists. He also served as a Member of the Delegation of the International Indian Treaty Council (a Non-Governmental Organization accredited by the United Nations).

Dr. Hart is not the only environmental leader at BU School of Theology. Dean Mary Elizabeth Moore is involved in the Hebrew idea of *tikkun olam*, translated as “repair of the world.” “This phrase embraces the ideals of justice, compassion, peace, and ecological integrity,” she says. “I measure the value of my research and writing by its contribution to *tikkun olam*, and while the School of Theology does not hold the phrase at the center of its vision, I know it hopes to contribute to those same values.”

#### **Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, IL**

**Student Population:** 344

**Denomination:** Roman Catholic

<http://www.ctu.edu/>

The Catholic Theological Union has the distinction of being the first Roman Catholic seminary to join the Green Seminary Initiative. The institution has offered four faith-based environmental courses from two different faculty members including “Ethics, Spirituality, and Global Climate Change” and “Catholic Environmental Ethics: Sources, Norms, and Issues,” the description for which says:

“Care for the Earth is more than an Earth Day slogan. Catholic doctrine and Catholic moral theology provide a rich grounding for dealing with the complex and often perplexing issues that constitute today’s environmental crisis.”



The Catholic Theological Union also has a concentration in Ethics and a Master of Arts Justice Ministry degree. The concentration in Ethics requires students to take at least one of 21 ethics courses, seven of which include the environment in their descriptions. The MA Justice Ministry includes a concentration in Environmental Justice but is not considered a Master of Divinity.

**Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Wyncote, PA**

**Student Population:** Under 100

**Denomination:** Jewish Reconstructionist

<http://www.rrc.edu/>

Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC) has offered two faith-based environmental courses: "Food Justice" and "Rabbis as Activist Leaders for Environmental Sustainability and Justice," taught by Rabbi Mordechai Liebling. The College's specialization program titled Social Justice Organizing "trains rabbis to lead in creating a socially just, environmentally sustainable and spiritually fulfilling society."

RRC's Director of Student Life, Rabbi Nathan Martin, has been dedicated to fostering a deep connection between Judaism and environmental sustainability. The school also has two student-led environmental committees: the Green Committee, which coordinates student environmental initiatives, and the Tikkun Olam Committee, which "[reflects] RRC's commitment to educating rabbis with a social conscience."

**Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, TX**

**Student Population:** 191

**Denomination:** Presbyterian Church

<http://www.austinseminary.edu/>

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary has offered three faith-based environmental courses: "Environmental Ethics," "Nature, Theology, and Ethics: Christian Spirituality and Creation Care," and "Christian Creation and Spirituality." These courses are taught by Dr. William Greenway, Associate Professor of Philosophical Theology. During his tenure at Austin, Dr. Greenway has taught several other faith-based environmental courses including "Nature, Theology, and Ethics" and an experiential course titled "An Adventure in Wilderness and Spirituality."

**Candler School of Theology, Atlanta, GA**

**Student Population:** 441

**Denomination:** United Methodist Church

<http://candler.emory.edu/>

Candler School of Theology has offered three courses on the environment in a faith context: "The Bible and Care of the Earth," "Religious Education and Our Ecological Context," and "Natural Science and the Doctrine of Creation." Affiliated with Emory University, Candler has the benefit of being part of one of the most sustainable schools in the United States with a Gold STARS (Sustainability Tracking and Rating System) rating from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

**Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL**

**Student Population:** 234

**Denomination:** United Church of Christ

[www.ctschicago.edu](http://www.ctschicago.edu)

Chicago Theological Seminary has offered three faith and ecology courses: "Animals, Ecology, and Biblical Interpretation," "Creation Themes in the Hebrew Bible," and "Earth and Its Distress: Ecological Ethics in Christian Perspective," taught by two different faculty members.

**Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, IN**

**Student Population:** 163

**Denomination:** Christian Church Disciples of Christ

<http://www.cts.edu>

Christian Theological Seminary has offered three faith-based environmental courses from Dr. Carol F. Johnston, Associate Professor of Theology & Culture and Director of Lifelong Theological Education. These courses are “Ecojustice: Fostering Human Wellbeing on a Thriving Earth,” “Environmental Ethics,” and “The Bible and the Earth.”

**Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC**

**Student Population:** 657

**Denomination:** United Methodist Church

<http://divinity.duke.edu/>

Duke Divinity’s three environmental courses, “To Work and Watch: Toward a Biblical Ecology/Theology of Land,” “Food, Eating, and the Life of Faith,” and “Caring for Creation,” each offer a distinct narrative on the relationship among nature, humanity, and God.

**Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA**

**Student Population:** 324

**Denomination:** Multifaith

<http://hds.harvard.edu/>

The third Ivy League school in this report is Harvard Divinity School. The school’s three courses, “Introduction to Religion and Ecology,” “Green Buddhism: Faith, Ecology, and Activism,” and “Religion, Ecology and Human Rights,” look at the intersection of faith and the environment. Harvard Divinity’s mission, “To help in building a world in which people can live and work together across religious and cultural divides,” encourages a holistic approach to religious teaching with exposure to interreligious and ecologically conscious educational content.

**Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, PA**

**Student Population:** 167

**Denomination:** Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

<http://www.lts.edu/>

In addition to the “Ecology and Stewardship” course at Gettysburg, which has been offered since 1994, Reverend Dr. Gilson A. C. Waldkoenig has offered “Ecology and Religion,” “EcoTheology in Northern Appalachia (an immersion seminar),” and “Places of Faith: Ethnography of Religion.” In addition to curricula, Gettysburg has invested in a sustainable infrastructure working to lower its carbon footprint and updating the Schmucker Hall residence building with LEED green building certification.

**Meadville Lombard Theological School, Chicago, IL**

**Student Population:** Under 100

**Denomination:** Unitarian Universalist

<http://www.meadville.edu/>

The description for the Meadville course, “Cosmos and Ethos: Religious Naturalism and the Climate Crisis” states, “To the extent that progressive religious leaders are committed to justice and compassion, then we should be actively committed to the struggle for climate justice.” The philosophy of this course, which is taught by Professor Michael S. Hogue, holds true throughout Meadville’s educational values as well as its commitment to sustainable building and financial practices. At the time of this report’s release, Meadville Lombard Theological School has three faith-based ecology courses in its catalogue: “The Big Blue Marble: Theology and Globalization,” “Ecology and Theology” and “Ecotheological Ethics: Bios, Anthropos, Theos.”

**Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, Los Angeles, CA**

**Student Population:** Under 100

**Denomination:** Jewish Conservative

<http://ziegler.aju.edu/>

Zeigler is an example of a rabbinical school that integrates environmental themes into many courses that it has offered, including its "Introduction to Halakhah (Jewish Law)" course. The "Science and Religion" course looks at ancient and contemporary thought and philosophy on the relationship between science and religion with consideration of environmental and ecological issues. And the "Introduction to Jewish Philosophy" devotes one class session to readings on Judaism and the environment and a discussion of those perspectives. Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson's article on biodiversity states, "Since Judaism understands nature as God's creation, cultivating marvel at the teeming abundance of life and the diverse array of living things is foundational to our religious experience. Indeed, the experience of holiness through nature has inspired most of the world's religious traditions."

**Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC**

**Student Population:** 1876

**Denomination:** Southern Baptist

<http://www.sebts.edu/>

In addition to hosting the Seminary Stewardship Alliance, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary has offered the course "Ethics and Environmental Responsibility," which analyzes the morality of creation care in a Christian context. Moreover, Southeastern hosts lectures, conferences, and symposia on environmental stewardship every year.

**Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, MO**

**Student Population:** 662

**Denomination:** Lutheran Church

<http://www.csl.edu/>

Concordia Seminary has offered two courses that merge environmental issues with faith-based learning. These courses are "Care of Creation" and "The Care of God's Creation." The first of these examines "the biblical narrative of creation and how it provides a framework for Christian life and a sustainable environmental ethic." The second course is more concerned with the role of humanity within God's creation and the neglect of creation care with respect to present-day ecological issues.

**Denver Seminary, Littleton, CO**

**Student Population:** 990

**Denomination:** Multi Denominational

<http://www.denverseminary.edu/>

Denver Seminary has offered a course called "Stewardship in Creation: Theology and Outdoor Practice," which introduces students to a biblically informed theology of creation and its stewardship practices with respect to contemporary environmental issues. Another course, "Systems Thinking and Decision-Making," examines decisions as part of a full system, including the environment.

**Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, DC**

**Student Population:** 700

**Denomination:** United Methodist Church

<https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/>

Wesley Theological Seminary offers courses that specifically look at roles of faith leaders in environmental stewardship, with classes like "Greening Your Congregation" and "The Church and the Ecological Crisis." Both courses pertain to Christian stewardship, first within the local church setting and individual responsibility, and then as an institution confronting broader environmental concerns, respectively. Other courses include "Liturgics: Ecology and Worship" and "Spirituality in Nature."

Dr. Beth Norcross, a Wesley adjunct professor and leader in the Green Seminaries Initiative, says of the school's extracurricular environmental efforts: "Wesley has offered ecologically-oriented immersion experiences, such as a



recent trip to Yellowstone National Park to study climate change, as well as community forums on a variety of environmental topics. [The school partners with various environmental initiatives such as Interfaith Power and Light and the Center for Spirituality in Nature in its Practice in Ministry program.] Faculty members also routinely integrate ecological themes into their teaching of core courses as well as electives.”

***List of 55 Seminaries Offering Courses on Faith and Ecology***

1. Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary
2. Asbury Theological Seminary
3. Ashland Theological Seminary
4. Austin Theological Seminary
5. Boston University School of Theology
6. Candler School of Theology
7. Catholic Theological Union
8. Catholic University of America: School of Theology and Religious Studies
9. Chicago Theological Seminary
10. Christian Theological Seminary
11. Claremont School of Theology
12. Columbia Theological Seminary
13. Concordia Seminary
14. Denver Seminary
15. Drew Theological School
16. Duke Divinity School
17. Eastern Mennonite Seminary
18. Fuller Theological Seminary
19. Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
20. George Fox Evangelical Seminary
21. Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
22. The Graduate Theological Union
23. Harvard Divinity School
24. Hebrew College
25. Hebrew Union College, New York
26. Holy Apostles College
27. Luther Seminary
28. Lutheran School of Theology
29. Lutheran Seminary Program in the Southeast
30. Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg
31. Lutheran Theological Seminary and the Zygon Center
32. McCormick Theological Seminary
33. Meadville Lombard Theological School
34. Methodist Theological School in Ohio
35. North Park Theological Seminary
36. Oblate School of Theology
37. Payne Theological Seminary
38. Princeton Theological Seminary
39. Reconstructionist Rabbinical College
40. Regent College
41. Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity at Saint Thomas University
42. Saint Paul School of Theology
43. San Francisco Theological Seminary
44. Santa Clara University
45. Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry
46. Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
47. Truett Theological Seminary – Baylor
48. Union Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education, Richmond Campus
49. Union Theological Seminary
50. Vancouver School of Theology
51. Wake Forest University School of Divinity
52. Wartburg Theological Seminary
53. Wesley Theological Seminary
54. Yale Divinity School
55. Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies

## Seven Selected Courses on Faith and Ecology

There are a myriad of ways in which schools have chosen to represent and teach on faith-based environmental ideas. While many have chosen to approach environmental topics as ethical, others have dug deeply into religious text and stories to find the connection between the spiritual and the natural world. Here are seven courses that stood out to us as the most interesting intersection of these fields. Commentary from the report authors about each course appears in italics following the summary.

### ***Selected Courses on Faith and Ecology***

1. Francis of Assisi: Prophet of Peace and of Creation
2. The Theology and Ecology of Common Ground
3. Moral Theology Topics: Oikos of God: Economy and Ecology in the Global Household
4. Rabbis as Activist Leaders for Environmental Sustainability and Justice
5. The Church and the Ecological Crisis
6. Sacred Earth: Indigenous Peoples' Ecological Traditions
7. Systems Thinking and Decision-Making

#### ***Francis of Assisi: Prophet of Peace and of Creation***

**Catholic University of America: School of Theology and Religious Studies:** Rev. Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D.

In the pursuit of peace and the preservation of the environment, Francis of Assisi is universally proposed as a patron, intercessor, and model. In addition to examining the life of Francis and the struggles of his time, this course will examine in depth the portrait of Francis written by St. Bonaventure, who understood Francis to be a model of every Christian called to be an instrument of peace and a catalyst in respecting creation.

*St. Francis became the patron saint of nature and the environment based on his concern for all of the Creator's inhabitants. Pope Francis chose his own name in part due to the ecology-related writings of St. Francis, and titled his Encyclical on climate change, "Be Praised," based on a St. Francis teaching.*

#### ***The Theology and Ecology of Common Ground***

**Drew Theological School:** Dr. Laurel Kearns and Danna Knowle Fewell

This course focuses on the role of camp/retreat ministry in inspiring leaders who shape society by engaging communities and congregations in ministries of earth care and social justice as expressions of holy common ground. Students will study biblical and theological perspectives on the link between faith in God and loving interdependence among people and all of creation.

*This is one course in a series at Drew that looks at the role of common ground and community in religious studies. The relationship between community and ecology is an expanding area of interest within academic circles.*

#### ***Moral Theology Topics: Oikos of God: Economy and Ecology in the Global Household***

**Garrett- Evangelical Theological Seminary:** Dr. Timothy Eberhart

This course is an introduction to theological reflection on economy and ecology in a globalized world. The Greek word for household is *oikos*, which means the words ecology (*oikos-logos*, the studied knowledge of our planetary household), economy (*oikos-nomos*, the management of the household), and ecumenicity (*oikou-menikos*, an openness to the worldwide household) all share a basic orientation to "home." There is growing awareness that the interconnected households we inhabit are increasingly marked, not by the kind of sustaining relations on which home life depends, but by various forms of injustice and degradation. There is also a growing recognition that the ecological and economic crises facing people worldwide are mutually constitutive and that singular, disconnected responses are therefore inadequate. The goal of this course is to draw upon diverse theological and ethical resources in thinking critically about the economic and ecological crises facing our common global household and constructively toward a more charitable, just, and sustainable future.

*Like the Systems Thinking course from Denver Seminary described below, this course is included here because it looks at more than ethics and text, exploring the interconnectedness of humanity and nature. Based on the premise that the world is a united residence under God, the course is important and interesting for its ecological allusions to universality.*

### ***Rabbis as Activist Leaders for Environmental Sustainability and Justice***

**Reconstructionist Rabbinical College:** Rabbi Mordechai Liebling

The course will combine text, experiential exercises and activist involvement. It will cover fundamental teachings on Judaism and the environment, a deepening of our personal connection to the earth and the basics of nonviolent direct action. A unique and influential component will be activism. During the course of the semester, all matriculated students will be required to devote at least eight hours to an environmental campaign.

*Not only does this course discuss the direct role of religious leaders as activist leaders, but it also hold a requirement for its students to devote time to environmental work. This course acknowledges the role of spiritual leaders in the political sphere, which, in part, relates to environmental activism. The course posits that religious leaders are also activists given that many campaigns come about due to moral and ethical issues.*

### ***The Church and the Ecological Crisis***

**Wesley Theological Seminary:** Dr. Greg Hitzhusen and Dr. Beth Norcross

Church leaders around the world are calling upon the faithful to address the moral dimensions of ecological degradation, and a growing community of theologians claims that the destruction of the earth is the “central moral imperative of our times.” Accordingly, this course seeks to explore the role of the church in addressing ecological concerns, and to equip pastors and other Christian leaders with the theological, spiritual, and practical tools they will need to lead their congregations in faithfully responding to this moral imperative.

*The morality of the ecological crisis has long been discussed by philosophers and theologians. By focusing on the ecological crisis as the “central moral imperative of our times,” Hitzhusen and Norcross are refocusing the crisis from one of scientific knowledge to one of human morality, a topic central to modern religion. This course stands out for its versatility. Its ability to fit into any religious curriculum is laudable.*

### ***Sacred Earth: Indigenous Peoples' Ecological Traditions***

**Boston University School of Theology:** Dr. John Hart

A study of indigenous peoples’ traditional teachings about the relationship of spirituality, ecology, and community well-being. A particular focus will be the words and works of representative twentieth century writers and spiritual leaders, and include the life and teachings of Lakota elder Black Elk; Muskogee elder Phillip Deere; Wanapum elder David Sohappay; and Dakota scholar and activist Vine Deloria, Jr.

*Despite the acknowledgement that many indigenous cultures incorporate reliance upon and reverence of the Earth, the study of indigenous traditions is very rarely included in either religious or environmental education. By overlooking indigenous cultures, we overlook both the spiritual roots of modern religions and, perhaps more importantly, the ways in which these people use spiritual beliefs and ingenuity to work in partnership with the natural world.*

### ***Systems Thinking and Decision-Making***

**Denver Seminary**

Provides an introduction to systems theory and helps leaders to develop a holistic approach to gathering and organizing information, solving problems, making decisions, and implementing plans.

*This course is unique in looking outside of the realm of both the purely ethical approach and the text-based approach. Systems thinking is a complex idea about the interconnectedness of all things. In systems thinking and systems theory, every situation is part of at least one interconnected system. By looking at all issues as systems, rather than isolated problems, the systems thinker is able to problem solve for the world, rather than just for humanity. Systems thinking therefore relates deeply to ecological concepts.<sup>10</sup>*

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<sup>10</sup> To read more on this connection, see <http://www.ecoliteracy.org/essays/systems-thinking>



## Instructors of Note

The following instructors have made significant contributions to the field of faith and ecology education, including with respect to the number of different courses they teach on the subject.

**Dr. Timothy Eberhart**, Assistant Professor of Theology and Ecology and Director of the Course of Study School, **Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary**

On his biography page, Dr. Eberhart states that his “vocation as a moral theologian ordained in The United Methodist Church is based in the commitment to guide others--as I seek myself--to better understand and more faithfully participate in this divine work of redemption, justice, reconciliation, and healing in relation to the many socio-political, economic, and ecological perils facing us today.” Dr. Eberhart is an ordained elder in the Dakotas Conference of the United Methodist Church. He was invited to serve on the national planning committee for the 2014 Congress on Urban Ministry and was elected North American secretary for the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies. He teaches five faith-based environmental courses at Garrett-Evangelical.

More information on Dr. Eberhart can be found at: <https://www.garrett.edu/academics/faculty/timothy-eberhart>

**Dr. William Greenway**, Associate Professor of Philosophical Theology, **Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary**

Dr. Greenway’s profile details his academic interests in “contemporary conversations among theology and philosophy and church and society. He is especially interested in theology and ecology and spirituality. He speaks regularly at churches, academic conferences, and publishes in journals like *The Christian Century*, *The Journal of Religion*, and *Theology Today*.” Dr. Greenway has served as a teaching fellow at the Princeton Theological Seminary as well as a visiting lecturer at Princeton University. He has served various churches in the United States as well as in the Philippines. He teaches four faith-based environmental courses at Austin Presbyterian.

More information on Dr. Greenway can be found at:  
[http://www.austinseminary.edu/cf\\_directory/dirprofile.cfm?p=2575&id=10](http://www.austinseminary.edu/cf_directory/dirprofile.cfm?p=2575&id=10)

**Dr. John Hart**, Professor of Christian Ethics, **Boston University School of Theology**

According to his biographical page, “Dr. Hart’s teaching interests are in the areas of social ethics, environmental ethics, liberation theology and ethics, and science and Christianity. His research interests and writing are focused particularly on issues of social and ecological justice, and on ecology as a bridge between science and religion.” Testifying to his expertise in his course titled, *Sacred Earth: Indigenous Peoples’ Ecological Traditions*, “Dr. Hart has worked with native peoples’ spiritual leaders and human rights activists, including as a Member of the Delegation of the International Indian Treaty Council (a Non-Governmental Organization accredited to the United Nations) to the U.N. International Human Rights Commission, Geneva, Switzerland (1987, 1990), and as an invited Observer at the World Conference of Indigenous Peoples, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil while participating in the United Nations Earth Summit (1992).” He teaches four faith-based environmental courses at the BU School of Theology.

More information on Dr. Hart can be found at: <http://www.bu.edu/sth/profile/john-hart/>

**Dr. Laurel Kearns**, Associate Professor of Sociology and Religion and Environmental Studies, **Drew Theological School**

Dr. Kearns has researched, published, and given talks around the globe on religion and environmentalism for over 20 years. In addition to co-founding the Green Seminary Initiative, she has been a board member of GreenFaith since 1995, and now serves on the Sustainability Committees of both Drew University and the American Academy of Religion. She has also published articles relating faith to the natural world in academic works such as *The Encyclopedia of Women and World Religion* and *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*.

More information on Dr. Kearns can be found at: <http://users.drew.edu/lkearns/>

**Dr. Beth Norcross**, Adjunct Professor, **Wesley Theological Seminary**

Dr. Norcross has taught myriad courses connecting faith to the environment and published articles in publications such as *Sojourners Magazine* and *EARTHletter*. Furthermore, she has worked as professional staff for the U.S. Senate National Parks and Forests Subcommittee and as Vice President of Conservation for American Rivers, a conservation organization dedicated to the protection of rivers and riverine habitat. Her specialization is in eco-theology. She is a co-founder and active leader in the Green Seminary Initiative.

More information about Dr. Norcross can be found at: <http://www.centerforspiritualityinnature.org/#!/biography/c1r0d>

**Dr. Matthew Riley**, Lecturer in Christianity and Ecology, **Yale Divinity School and Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies**

Dr. Riley currently serves as a Lecturer in Christianity and Ecology at Yale Divinity School and the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental studies where he teaches courses on “Christianity and Ecology” and “Christianity and Environmental Ethics.” Dr. Riley also teaches “Environmental Ethics” and “Religion and Ecology” in the Summer program of the Yale Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics. While teaching and researching, he is engaged in building online courses in Religion and Ecology at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and works as a Research Associate at the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale. Dr. Riley also currently serves as the Book Review Editor for the journal *Worldviews: Environment, Culture, Religion* (Brill). In the past he has served as a Steering Committee Member for the Religion and Ecology Group at the American Academy of Religion, he worked for the Green Seminary Initiative, he taught biology in the New York City public school system, and he designed the curricular materials for the Journey of the Universe project. His current research focuses on the legacy of Lynn T. White, jr.

More information about Dr. Riley can be found at: <https://environment.yale.edu/profile/matthew-riley/>

**Rev. Dr. Timothy Van Meter**, Associate Professor in the Alford Chair of Christian Education and Youth Ministry, **Methodist Theological School in Ohio (MTSO)**

According to his biography, Rev. Dr. Van Meter’s “teaching and research [is] related to the spiritual and vocational aspirations of youth and young adults including youth cultures, popular culture, spiritual practices, ecology, justice and peace movements, communal movements, alternative forms of church and educational theory.” Rev. Dr. Van Meter teaches seven faith-based environmental courses at MTSO.

More information on Rev. Dr. Van Meter can be found at:  
<http://www.mtso.edu/about-mtso/faculty-directory/timothy-l-van-meter/>

**Rev. Dr. Gilson Waldkoenig**, Professor of Church in Society in the B.B. Maurer Chair in Town and Country Ministry, **Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg**

According to his profile, “Waldkoenig works in ecological ethics, ethnography of religion, and the church in rural society.” He has published several papers about the connection between faith and the environment and is working with the Washington Theological Consortium and multiple other faith-environment programs to integrate stewardship into academic values and shared resources. He teaches three faith-based environmental courses at Gettysburg.

More information on Rev. Dr. Gilson Waldkoenig can be found at:  
<http://www.ltsg.edu/about-us/faculty-staff-directory/waldkoenig-gil>

## Concentrations in Faith and Ecology

Concentrations refer to a track or cluster of courses in which students can focus their studies and, in some cases, receive a certificate of completion, somewhat like a major or minor in traditional higher education. The schools listed below offer varying formats for such programs.

### **George Fox Evangelical Seminary**

*Concentration: Christian Earthkeeping*

The mission statement of this concentration is: To form evangelical leaders who cultivate the care of creation in their communities.

Christian Earthkeeping is the Church's response to the ecological crisis and to God's command to "keep" the earth (Genesis 2:15). Why are we doing this? The earth is endangered. The evangelical Church has been silent. The Bible speaks to our relationship with the Created Order. The Church must respond to God's command to "keep" the earth (Gen 2:15). Christian leaders need a theological and biblical basis for Earthkeeping.

### **Methodist Theological School in Ohio**

*Specialization: Ecology and Justice*

Out of love and respect for future generations, religious leaders need to provide those they serve with a theological framework for resisting greed, gluttony and the destruction of resources. This specialization equips students to lead others in developing economic, political, social, and technological lifestyles for a more ecologically equitable and sustainable world, leading to a higher quality of life for all of God's creation.

### **Reconstructionist Rabbinical College**

*Specialization: Social Justice Organizing Program*

The Social Justice Organizing Program trains rabbis to lead in creating a socially just, environmentally sustainable and spiritually fulfilling society. It is the first specialized academic track at a Jewish seminary to focus on justice organizing. And the values and goals of the program inform academic and community life throughout RRC. Rabbi Mordechai Liebling, '85, a longtime leader in Jewish social justice, directs the program.

### **Wake Forest University**

*Concentration: Food and Faith*

The Wake Forest University School of Divinity has offered a concentration within the M.Div. degree designed to equip religious leaders with the knowledge, skills, and pastoral habits necessary to guide congregations and other faith-based organizations into creating more redemptive food systems where God's shalom becomes visible for a hungry world.

*Concentration: Sustainability*

The Wake Forest Center for Energy, Environment, and Sustainability (CEES) and the School of Divinity provide students with exposure to sustainability issues through the Graduate Certificate in Sustainability. The certificate requires the completion of 12 credit hours in coursework related to natural science, social sciences and humanities, business management, and law and policy.

### **Yale Divinity School**

*Joint Degree: Religion and Ecology*

The Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies (FES) and Yale Divinity School offers a joint Master's degree program in Religion and Ecology. It is aimed at students who wish to integrate the study of environmental issues and religious communities in their professional careers and for those who wish to study the cultural and ethical dimensions of environmental problems. The joint degree is strongly supported by co-appointed faculty and by the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale ([www.fore.yale.edu](http://www.fore.yale.edu)).

### **Washington Theological Consortium**

*Certificate in Ecology and Theology: A Course of Study for Seminarians and the Public*

The Washington Theological Consortium is a community of theological schools in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States that shares resources, opportunities for faculty enrichment, student courses and programming, and educational materials. There are over a dozen member schools, many of which are highlighted in this report for exemplary leadership in this field.

For the 2015-16 academic year the Washington Theological Consortium launched a new certificate of study in Ecology and Theology in response to growing church commitments to address the ecological crisis. Colleges and universities have been developing programs in ecology and integrating ecological studies across their curricula. Church organizations and congregations have been devoting increasing attention to theology and ministry pertaining to environmental sustainability and the integrity of creation. Theological schools and other faith-based groups are increasingly recognizing the importance of the role of religious leaders in helping the public to face ecological challenges from a faith perspective. At the Consortium, a group of faculty who teach at the intersection of theology and ecology have designed a certificate to encourage our students and members of the public to explore further their own interest in the study of theology and ecology.



## Descriptions of 162 Courses on Faith and Ecology

Below is the collection of courses, descriptions, and instructors when available. The full and continually updated spreadsheet can be found at: <http://www.interfaithsustain.com/green-seminaries/>

The online spreadsheet also contains information about seminaries outside of the U.S. and Canada that have offered courses on faith and ecology, including Israel, Italy, and India, which are not contained in the list below.

### **Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary**

Elkhart, Indiana, USA | <http://www.ambs.edu>

#### **Creation Care: Theology, Ethics, and Spirituality; Dr. Malinda Berry, Dr. Ted Koontz & Dr. Luke Gascho**

Students will engage in understanding their connection to God and creation through four major themes: (1) the intersection of place and spirituality, (2) the theological context of creation care, (3) the ethical and economic frameworks of eco-justice, and (4) creation care practices in the church. Some sessions will be held at Goshen College's Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center in Wolf Lake, Indiana; others will be on the AMBS campus.

#### **Eco-Justice: A Vision for a Sustainable City; Dr. Clinton Stockwell**

The course will develop a holistic vision for a sustainable city as an outworking of the concept of shalom, a just peace. The course will evaluate the three components of sustainable community development: the three E's of economics, environment, and equity (or social justice). Participants will explore the course topic via readings, panel discussions, and site visits. Students will have the option of exploring key issues such as energy policy, food production, environmental justice and pollution and how these challenges relate to the central course themes. Central to the course is the question, "What does it mean to be a sustainable urban community?"

#### **Spiritual Practices: Water of Life; Pastor Janeen Bertsche Johnson**

This seminar will weave together care for creation—specifically the resource of water—with study of biblical texts about water, reflection on the role of water in Christian faith, practice of spiritual and conservation disciplines, and field trips. Participants will also consider how to lead the faith community in its response to water issues. Themes include the water cycle, uses and misuses of water, impact of climate change and pollution, conservation, and restoration.

#### **Thinking Ethically; Dr. Justin Heinzekehr**

How should Christians respond to violence, health care and creation care issues? What choices face us regarding sexuality and systemic racism? To deepen ability to think ethically, students will examine major approaches to the moral life and decision making that draw upon the resources of Christian faith and theology, especially the role of Scripture, Jesus, and the church in ethics.

### **Asbury Theological Seminary**

Wilmore, Kentucky, USA | <http://www.asburyseminary.edu>

#### **Christian Mission and Theology of Creation; Dr. Howard Snyder**

This course studies the biblical theology of creation, particularly as it relates to the mission of God and thus the role of the church. We focus on the place of the created order in God's redemptive plan, on earth stewardship, and on the meaning of "the restoration of all things" in the New Creation by the Spirit through the saving and healing work of Jesus Christ.

The course draws on biblical, historical, and systematic theology, cross-referencing to contemporary missiological, ecological, and environmental issues.

### **Ashland Theological Seminary**

Ashland, Ohio, USA | <http://seminary.ashland.edu/>

#### **Global Ethics**

We live in a world of compressed interdependence and interaction between local and global contexts so that ethical issues impact all who share this planet. This course provides biblical, theological and missional frameworks for fostering global moral concern by the Church for the world. We will analyze macro-ethical issues, such as care for creation, economics, poverty, disease, religious violence and terrorism, and develop practical strategies of response for local congregations.

**Austin Theological Seminary**

Austin, Texas, USA | <http://www.austinseminary.edu/>

**Christian Creation Spirituality; Dr. William Greenway**

This course explores the theological, spiritual, and ethical aspects of the relationship of human beings to nature. Major Christian theological approaches to nature are contrasted both to one another and to other approaches influential in the West (e.g., scientific, Native American). Correlative spiritualities are considered and key biblical texts investigated. Additionally, the class delves into ethical questions regarding the status and treatment of animals, biodiversity, the idea and significance of “wilderness,” and issues of sustainable development and conservation.

**Environmental Ethics; Dr. William Greenway**

This course focuses on issues in environmental ethics from a Christian perspective. Issues that may be considered include climate change, distribution and accessibility of potable water, preservation of habitat, valuing and treatment of non-human animals, endangered species, genetic engineering, environmental racism, population, conservation, wilderness, as well as the use, preservation, and distribution of limited resources. The course attends both to major contemporary secular ethical and legal approaches to issues and to major Christian ethical approaches.

**Nature, Theology, and Ethics: Christian Spirituality and Creation Care; Dr. William Greenway**

This course explores the theological and ethical aspects of our relationship to creation. Major Christian theological approaches to creation are contrasted both to one another and to other approaches influential in the West (e.g., scientific, Native American). Correlative spiritualities are considered and key biblical texts investigated. Additionally, we delve into ethical questions regarding the status and treatment of animals, bio-diversity, the idea and significance of “wilderness,” and issues of sustainable development and conservation.

**Boston University School of Theology**

Boston, Massachusetts, USA | <http://www.bu.edu/sth/>

**Advanced Topics in Ethics: Ecology; Dr. John Hart**

An in-depth study of cross-disciplinary, cross-religious and cross-cultural approaches to ecological issues, oriented toward understanding diverse issues in breadth and depth; and a collaborative development of ecological ethical concepts and principles to be integrated into human consciousness and communities, and implemented in community projects.

**Christian Ecological Ethics and Political Issues; Dr. John Hart**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to aspects and dimensions of the ecological crisis; to help them reflect theologically and ethically on ecological problems; to develop or enhance their particular faith tradition's theoretical and practical engagement with ecological issues; and to formulate public policy possibilities and practical projects to address and seek to solve ecological problems.

**Christianity and Ecology in Community Contexts; Dr. John Hart**

A study of Christian and Native American spiritual insights related to ecological perspectives, principles, and practices. Student classroom sessions, research, and analysis will be complemented by field work: engagement with members of faith traditions and environmental organizations in the Boston area. Writings of theologians and ecologists, statements from individual denominations and ecumenical associations, teachings of native elders, and the relationship of the proposed Earth Charter to religious teachings and current ecological issues will be discussed. Economics, ethics, and ecology will be integrated with the evolving School of Theology Green Vision statement, its implementation on campus, and its engagement in projects with community organizations and faith communities off-campus.

**Sacred Earth: Indigenous Peoples' Ecological Traditions; Dr. John Hart**

A study of indigenous peoples' traditional teachings about the relationship of spirituality, ecology, and community well-being. A particular focus will be the words and works of representative twentieth century writers and spiritual leaders, and include the life and teachings of Lakota elder Black Elk; Muskogee elder Phillip Deere; Wanapum elder David Sohappay; and Dakota scholar and activist Vine Deloria, Jr.

**Candler School of Theology**  
Atlanta, Georgia, USA | <http://candler.emory.edu>

**The Bible and Care of the Earth; Dr. Carol Newsom**

In Jewish and Christian traditions, and especially within Protestant denominations, the Bible is a primary, though certainly not the only, resource for the formation of values, ethos, and commitments. But to ask “what the Bible says” about ecology or even about nature is to encounter complex hermeneutical issues. The world views, symbolic systems, and urgent questions of ancient Israel and early Christianity are vastly different from those of the modern world. Nor do the biblical texts represent a single, consistent perspective. One should not expect to find “answers.” But one will find important perspectives for forming an ethic of care for the earth and for challenging the assumptions of purely secular, technologized views of the earth and its creatures. Incorporating this transformed understanding into our personal lives and practices and into the communal life and witness of congregations is the next step. This course will draw upon and contribute to your contexts and experiences in the church and community with a particular focus on the practices and theology of food.

**Religious Education and Our Ecological Context; Prof. Jennifer Ayres**

In this course, students develop a theological framework for understanding the ecological dimensions of Christian life and vocation, and examine educational practices and theories that contribute to the formation of an ecological faith.

**Catholic Theological Union**  
Chicago, Illinois, USA | <http://www.ctu.edu/>

**Catholic Environmental Ethics: Sources, Norms, and Issues; Dr. Dawn Nothwehr**

Care for the Earth is more than an Earth Day slogan. Catholic doctrine and Catholic moral theology provide a rich grounding for dealing with the complex and often perplexing issues that constitute today's environmental crisis. This course examines key theological and ethical sources and norms that can assist us in achieving conversion from our abusive relationships with the Earth, to moral, sustainable and reverential ways of living.

**Ecology and Spiritual Practice; Dr. Mary Frohlich, RSCJ, No course description found.**

**Ethics, Spirituality, and Global Climate Change; Mary Frohlich and Dawn Nothwehr**

The 2006 Academy Award-winning film, “An Inconvenient Truth” brought the fact of global warming and its catastrophic effects to the consciousness of thousands. Global climate change is a reality that Christians cannot ignore. While engaging the scientific, economic, and political realities that show the urgency of climate change issues, we will look beyond that dilemma to explore the deeper spiritual and moral resources available in the Christian and Roman Catholic traditions. Students will be assisted in finding ways to integrate their spirituality and ethical practice and to engage in concrete actions that seek resolutions to the many issues global climate change presents to our world.

**To Care for the Earth: Ethics and the Environment; Dr. Dawn Nothwehr**

Later in the course, we explore various approaches to environmental ethics and begin to see the cause and effect relationship the proponents of these various methods hold as the trigger for the current environmental crisis. From an ecumenical perspective, Christian and Jewish sources will be reviewed for the moral wisdom they offer to Christians today. Special attention will be given to the various statements on the environment published by Roman Catholic magisterial bodies from around the globe and the Franciscan tradition.

**Catholic University of America: School of Theology and Religious Studies**  
Washington, DC, USA | <http://trs.cua.edu/>

**Ethics and the Environment**

To be human is to be ‘placed’ in the world, both in a ‘natural’ and ‘built’ environment. Our vision of what it means to be human shapes what we build, especially in relation to the natural environment. Our buildings, from the humblest shack to the grandest Cathedral, make moral statements. This course surveys historical and contemporary theories of how humans are to build, whether it be, e.g. homes, cities, monuments, or churches.

**Francis of Assisi: Prophet of Peace and of Creation; Rev. Dr. Regis Armstrong, OFM**

In the pursuit of peace and the preservation of the environment, Francis of Assisi is universally proposed as a patron, intercessor, and model. In addition to examining the life of Francis and the struggles of his times, this course will examine in depth the portrait of Francis written by St. Bonaventure, who understood Francis to be a model of every Christian called to be an instrument of peace and a catalyst in respecting creation.

**Religion & Ecology; Dr. William Barbieri**

This course examines interrelated issues pertaining to religion, ecology, science, and technology. [The course] includes religious and ethical issues related to cosmology, nature, global environmental problems, and types of ecological spirituality and theology.

**Spirituality, Religion and Social Transformation**

An examination of ways in which some major spiritual and religious authors have addressed issues of slavery, global poverty, environmental degradation, and ethnic violence. Readings will be drawn from books and articles by such authors as John Woolman, Hans Kung, Stephanie Kaza, Patricia Mische, Marc Gopin, John Paul Lederach, and Pope John Paul II.

**Theology and Ecology; Rev. Msgr. Paul McPartlan**

In these times of ecological crisis, what resources does the Christian tradition have to offer to current debate? This seminar considers a range of material from the last half-century, with particular attention to contributions from Christian East and West, and to the ecological discussion that has taken place under the auspices of the World Council of Churches.

**Chicago Theological Seminary**

Chicago, Illinois, USA | <https://www.ctschicago.edu/>

**Animals, Ecology, and Biblical Interpretation; Dr. Ken Stone, No course description found.**

**Creation Themes in the Hebrew Bible; Dr. Ken Stone**

This course examines a number of biblical texts that shed light on Israel's understanding of creation. Attention will be given to the ancient socio-cultural background of the biblical creation texts; the relations among God, humanity, and nature that are presupposed by the creation texts; the role of gender in the biblical views on creation; and the impact of ecojustice hermeneutics on biblical interpretation.

**Earth and Its Distress: Ecological Ethics in Christian Perspective; Pastor Janet Parker**

Course Goals: To attain familiarity with the breadth and depth of Christian theological reflection upon the ecological crisis, and to understand the resources of the Christian faith for responding creatively to this crisis; To develop an understanding of environmental issues as justice issues and as theological and ethical issues of deep concern to Christians; To learn about the environmental challenges of the Chicago region and some of the resources and groups working to address these challenges; To listen to unfamiliar voices from within and without the Christian tradition and to be educated by these voices from the margins about our responsibilities toward the creation and the other beings with whom we share the planet; To participate in the educative process by which the above goals will be met, through active involvement in class discussion and through teaching a class as part of a group research project.

**Christian Theological Seminary**

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA | <http://www.cts.edu/>

**The Bible and the Earth; Dr. Carol Johnston & Rev. Dr. Marti Steussy, No course description found.**

**Ecojustice: Fostering Human Wellbeing on a Thriving Earth; Dr. Carol Johnston**

Ecojustice is the understanding that justice is a matter of both economic and ecological concern, and that both are an integral part of the Gospel.

This seminar will enable students to make the connections and see how they are being lived out in both congregations and communities that are addressing the global environmental/ economic crisis and trying to restore creation and enable all life to flourish together on the Earth. Biblical and theological foundations for Creation Care and Ecojustice will be explored, along with the scientific, economic, and ethical dimensions of the crisis and movements toward solutions. We will hear from community and congregational leaders who are doing wonderfully creative and faithful work in Indiana and beyond, and visit green projects.



**Claremont School of Theology**  
Claremont, California, USA | <http://www.cst.edu/>

**Environmental Ethics; Dr. Grace Yia-Hei Kao**

This course examines various religious perspectives on the meaning and value of the natural world and the normative relationships that are posited between humans and nature. We will study these questions comparatively within and across major religious traditions, while also engaging contemporary movements such as ecofeminism, deep ecology, and animal rights. Our goals will be to gain an overview of conceptual resources for thinking about environmental problems, describe what religion has to offer to thinking through these problems, and to articulate responses to environmental problems that draw on our own religious traditions.

**Columbia Theological Seminary**  
Decatur, Georgia, USA | <http://www.ctsnet.edu/index>

**Apocalyptic Ecology; Dr. Stanley Saunders**

This course explores the "ecology" – nature, structures, vocations, and practice – of the church as an eschatological body in the New Testament, especially in light of contemporary ecological issues. What notions of time and space shaped the church's self-understanding and practices? How did the church engage the imperial social models of its world? The class will examine early Christian ideals such as unity with diversity, forgiveness, hospitality, humility, and reconciliation as marks of the church and as ecological/ecclesiological principles.

**Creation, New Creation, and Ecology; Dr. William Brown & Dr. Stanley Saunders**

Core questions include: What are the ecological crises facing the present generation? What are the cultural, historical, and theological roots of the environmental and social issues we face? What are the most important biblical resources (and obstacles) for shaping faithful approaches to these issues? What shape might faithful ecological hermeneutics take? What is the human calling with regard to creation? (Are we necessary? For what?) In what ways are the foundational practices of the church ecological (or is the Creation incidental to Christian practices)? Is the church sustainable? (Is "eco-" an essential part of ecclesiology?) What are the practices of sustainable Christian community? What resources might we develop for working with congregations and young people on environmental issues?

**The Earth is the Lord's: Ecology, Theology, and the Church's Witness; Rev. Dr. Richard Floyd**

This course will explore the "ecological complaint" against Christianity (represented by White and others) and how various Christian theologians have responded to that complaint. After reviewing some of the key issues defining ecological theology as a distinct theological perspective, we will trace four major threads that are woven together in various ways in contemporary ecological theology: creation spirituality (Thomas Berry); process theology (Jay McDaniel); ecofeminist theology (Sallie McFague); and what I call "ecclesial" eco-theology (Jürgen Moltmann).

**Environment and Ecumene; Dr. Mark Douglas**

Much is being written about present and impending environmental crises around the world. But in the 21st Century, the environment will increasingly take a central role not only as a set of concerns that human beings throughout the world will have to address, but as a lens through which the global society will have to apply all other concerns. How will this lens develop? What priorities will it reveal? How might the Christian faith be seen through the lens? What resources might Christianity contribute to its development? And what might be the implications of this new way of thinking and being for ministry? This course will explore these and similar questions, developing theological resources through which to better understand the environment and environmental crises and examining some of the ways that the church and other programs are attempting to address the problems of a changing environment.

**How Manifold Are Your Works, O LORD! Creation in the Old Testament; Dr. William Brown**

Participants will study the various creation traditions of the Old Testament with a view toward their theological, spiritual, and ecological implications, particularly as the church addresses the crisis of environmental degradation by offering a message that is both prophetic and pastoral. The class will draw on a range of resources, from biblical scholarship to scientific research, in order to develop new and relevant ways of reading Scripture for our day and age.

### **New Creation and Ecology: Practicing in the Garden; *Dr. Taylor Flory & Dr. Stanley Saunders***

This course a) explores dimensions of the ecological crises facing the present generation, b) presents theological, scriptural, and anthropological resources for shaping ecological behavior, c) examines traditional Christian practices pertaining to community, the Body, and the world, and d) offers resources and models for working with congregations and young people on environmental issues.

### **Science, Religion, and the End of the World; *Dr. Chris De Pree & Dr. Mark Douglas***

The sciences and the Christian tradition provide narratives about the end of the world. But how do these narratives relate? How do we evaluate them independently, and in comparison? What are the implications of the narratives for the way we live and think today, a time before the end of the world? This course, taught by a professor of astrophysics from Agnes Scott College and a professor of religious ethics from Columbia Theological Seminary, takes up those critical questions and provides students with opportunities to study widely, think critically, and learn respectfully in a cross-disciplinary setting. To encourage imaginative thinking, sources of study for the course will be a combination of speculative fiction novels, movies, and selections from other books and articles.

### **Sustainable Church; *Dr. Stanley Saunders***

Is the Church sustainable? What might the Church have to contribute to social and ecological sustainability? What might the Church learn from contemporary discussions of sustainability and resilience? This course explores the variety of images of the church found within the New Testament, as well as the diverse values, convictions, perspectives, and practices that distinguished the early Christian communities from other social groups and institutions around them and that helped the churches endure and be resilient. Particular attention will be given to the practices—e.g., hospitality, forgiveness, sharing possessions, self-limitation, healing, exorcism, and love—that made the church sustainable and resilient in its cultural “ecosystem” and that might provide resources for sustainable Christian practice today.

### **Word for a Warming World: Bible, Creation, and the Science of Wonder; *Dr. William Brown***

Participants will study the various creation traditions of the Old Testament with a view toward their theological, spiritual, and ecological implications, particularly as the church addresses the crisis of global warming with a message that is both prophetic and pastoral. The class will draw on a range of resources, from biblical scholarship to scientific research, in order to develop new ways of reading Scripture in the light of science for the church.

#### **Concordia Seminary**

St. Louis, Missouri, USA | <http://www.csl.edu/>

### **Care of Creation**

Recent ecological narratives of our place and purpose within the world have been urged as alternatives to the Christian ‘anthropocentric’ story which incorporates both dominion over creation and alienation from creation. While these recent narratives make useful contributions to the discussion of the care of creation, they often have misread the Christian story. This course will examine the recent narratives, their reading (or misreading) the Christian story, and identify their positive contributions. It also will reiterate an accurate biblical theology of creation, and explore how a truly Christian theology of creation can enrich the creedal Gospel narrative and, in turn, provide an organic and holistic framework for the Christian life and a sustainable environmental ethic.

### **The Care of God’s Creation**

This course will explore neglected aspects of the doctrine of creation in the context of contemporary ecological issues and its implications for Christian discipleship. Attention will be given to the importance of creation within the Christian narrative, what it means to be a part of creation as human creatures, and our role as children of God who have been restored to God, to each other, and to His creation.

#### **Denver Seminary**

Littleton, Colorado, USA | <http://www.denverseminary.edu>

### **Stewardship in Creation: Theology and Outdoor Practice**

This course introduces students to a biblically informed theology of creation and its stewardship, discovering the rich Christian tradition of caring for creation, understanding how impacts to creation can disproportionately affect the poor, and developing a better informed apologetic concerning contemporary environmental issues.

## **Systems Thinking and Decision-Making**

Provides an introduction to systems theory and helps leaders to develop a holistic approach to gathering and organizing information, solving problems, making decisions, and implementing plans.

### **Drew Theological School**

Madison, New Jersey, USA | <http://www.drew.edu/theological/>

## **Christianity and Ecology; Dr. Laurel Kearns**

Examines a range of Christian responses to ecological concerns. Surveys some of the historical, philosophical, socio-political, theological, and environmental issues influences that shape the current planetary context and looks at an array of contemporary global religious eco-justice voices and emerging eco-theologies. What resources for an earth-friendly ethic are offered in the Christian religious tradition? Is environmentalism just about animals and wilderness? Where do justice issues come in? What are the major aspects of our societies and of our worldviews that need to be changed? How do we grapple with the environmental implications of our economic system? Where and how do ecological thinking, spirituality and religious thought come together? What can we do, what are others doing, to respond to ecological concerns?

**Developing Environmental Education and Resources,** No course description found.

## **Ecstatic Naturalism**

This class will involve an in-depth study of the various ways nature has been presented in world thinking with particular focus on South Asian and Euro-American traditions. Specific topics: the sacred, the spirit, naturalism (especially in its ecstatic form), grace, art via-a-vis religion, and a new theory of nature's self.

## **Greening the Church: Christianity and Ecology**

An overview of the earth crisis and a critique of Christianity's historical relationship to the earth. Surveys biblical and theological resources for constructive responses to this crisis.

## **Nature, God, and the New Cosmology**

An examination of some of the implications of the new cosmology for traditional ideas. The first part of this course looks at several conceptions of nature as they illuminate science and theology. The second part of the course probes into the new sciences of complexity and chaos theory insofar as they, too, illuminate the relationship between God and nature. The final part of the course examines current cosmological theories, with particular attention to those of Hawking. Topics include creation and the Big Bang, the origin of time, the no-boundary proposal, the Anthropic principle, the status of eschatology, and the problem of teleology.

## **Philosophies of Nature**

In this course we will examine several important philosophies of nature as well as develop our own working conception of nature. Theologically we will compare and contrast theism, pantheism, and panentheism as they articulate the relationship between god and nature. Both Western and Asian philosophies will be explored with special attention paid to: ancient Greek metaphysics (Plato and Aristotle), German Idealist philosophy (Schelling and Schopenhauer), American naturalism and pragmatism (Emerson, Peirce, Dewey, and Buchler), and classical Hinduism (Upanishads). The current perspective of ecstatic naturalism, as developed by Professor Corrington and others, will shape and direct our historical explorations. It affirms that nature is all that there is and that the sacred is in and of nature. There will also be a stress on art as a medium by and through which we can gain special access to nature and participate in nature's unconscious dimension.

The goal of the course is to bring us into deeper relationship with the powers and potencies of infinite nature and its spiritual dimensions. By exploring the human unconscious, in a new kind of spiritual psychoanalysis, we will also explore the full depths of nature and its spiritual heart.

## **Religion and the Earth**

Readings in spiritual, philosophical, feminist, scientific, and sociopolitical responses around the globe to the ecological crisis.

## **Spiritual Foundations for Sustainable and Ecological Initiatives**

An intensive study of selected problems and themes in contemporary sociology of religion having special significance for the church and its ministry.

### **The Theology and Ecology of Common Ground; *Dr. Danna Nolan Fewell & Dr. Laurel Kearns***

Focuses on the role of camp/retreat ministry in inspiring leaders who shape society by engaging communities and congregations in ministries of earth care and social justice as expressions of holy common ground. Students will study biblical and theological perspectives on the link between faith in God and loving interdependence among people and all of creation.

### **The Theory and Practice of Environmental Justice**

Readings in spiritual, philosophical, feminist, scientific, and socio-political responses around the globe to the ecological crisis. Course has a flexible field-based component designed to involve students in some way in local eco-justice issues.

### **Topics in Church and Society**

An intensive study of selected problems and themes in contemporary sociology of religion having special significance for the church and its ministry. For this course, the themes are sustainability / the ethics of sustainability.

### **Duke Divinity School**

Durham, North Carolina, USA | <http://www.divinity.duke.edu>

### **Agrarian Theology for an Urban World; *Dr. Norman Wirzba***

This class will consider how the character of modern industrial, technological, consumer cultures has given shape to and directed particular kinds of theological reflection. We will then examine how an agrarian position differs and what this difference means for our thinking about creation, God, salvation, and the nature and mission of the church. This course will encourage students to read scripture, and thus reinterpret theological motifs, with an agrarian point of view in mind because this was the dominant view in the time of the Bible's history. We will spend considerable time first exploring agrarian sympathies and responsibilities (both ancient and contemporary) so that we can then draw a contrast with current urban perspectives. Our aim is not to vilify urbanism but to see how an agrarian critique can transform urbanism into something that more closely resembles God's heavenly Jerusalem, a city that embodies key agrarian elements. We will also explore critiques of agrarianism and challenges to its future vitality.

### **Caring for Creation; *Dr. Norman Wirzba***

This course will develop a multi-faceted approach to developing and implementing a vision for the Church's care of creation. It will include an analysis of history, scriptural traditions, theological reflection, denominational statements and resolutions, and cultural critique, all with the overall aim of crafting practices for creation's and humanity's healing. By semester's end, students will be able to articulate several models of creation care – stewardship, virtue, ecclesial, priesthood, agrarian, monastic, indigenous, and liberation – and be able to show how these models might be put to work in diverse church settings like education, preaching, liturgy, mission and outreach.

### **Environmental Philosophy and Ethics; *Dr. Norm Christensen & Dr. Norman Wirzba***

This course examines the major themes and figures in environmental philosophy and ethics. Topics to be considered include: the nature of the world, the nature of ethical reasoning, environmental virtue, deep ecology, ecofeminism, environmental justice, criteria for decision-making, and the ethics of professional life in environmental fields.

### **Food, Eating, and the Life of Faith**

This course examines food systems and eating practices in light of Christian teaching. Our aim will be to develop a theological framework and set of practices that honor God and contribute to a peaceable creation and a just society through our eating. To accomplish this goal we will consider and critique current food economies in terms of how well they promote the health of bodies and creation's memberships. We will examine the Eucharist as an important Christian site for the evaluation of eating practices. We will also consider how eating is a powerful lens into a deeper understanding of life and death and the character of God and creation. A number of topics will be covered in this class, ranging from food distribution and eating disorders to vegetarianism and fasting. Scripture often situates important encounters and learning around table fellowship. This class will encourage us to develop forms of fellowship that participate in and witness to God's kingdom.

### **Theology in Ecological Context; *Dr. Norman Wirzba***

This course will begin with an examination of what ecological science means and how it has been incorporated in various philosophical schools (like Deep Ecology and Eco-feminism). We will then move to an exploration of what ecology means for theological reflection and for the life of the church. Next we will consider a more systematic treatment of several key Christian teachings to reveal their potential to aid in the work of ecological healing and creaturely life. The aim of this course is to equip



students with an ecologically informed theological consciousness so that contemporary debates about environmental matters can be understood and addressed from a distinctly Christian point of view.

### **Theology of Land**

The aims of this course are to: 1. Explore ancient Israel's theological understandings of land tenure and use, and further, to explore how land is a crucial element in the relations between humanity and the other creatures, on the one hand, humanity and God, on the other. 2. To engage in a serious rereading of the Biblical text in light of the contemporary ecological crisis. 3. To identify ideologies of land tenure and usage that are operative in contemporary societies, including our own, and to examine them critically in light of the biblical text and the present crisis.

### **The Theology and Spirituality of Place; Dr. Norman Wirzba**

A central question of this course is, what does it mean, and what does it look like for Christians to express their faith through the places – the homes, churches, neighborhoods, economies, architecture, public spaces – they live? In this course we will examine philosophical and theological resources that take up place as a primary concern. In particular, we will consider how specific places express and give shape to personal and communal life. By the end of the semester students will be able to evaluate particular places from a theological point of view.

### **To Work and Watch: Toward a Biblical Ecology**

The aims of this course are to: 1. Explore ancient Israel's theological understandings of land tenure and use, and further, to explore how land is a crucial element in the relations between humanity and the other creatures, on the one hand, humanity and God, on the other. 2. To engage in a serious rereading of the Biblical text in light of the contemporary ecological crisis. 3. To identify ideologies of land tenure and usage that are operative in contemporary societies, including our own, and to examine them critically in light of the biblical text and the present crisis.

#### **Earlham School of Religion**

Richmond, Indiana, USA | <http://www.esr.earlham.edu/>

### **Eco-Spirituality; Katherine Murray**

Eco-Spirituality connects Earth care and pastoral care with the underlying belief that when we connect lovingly with the earth, our shared harmony and peace helps bring about the personal and planetary wholeness. This course is designed to survey the current thought in Earth care and explore our historical, philosophical, and religious underpinnings of our relationship with the earth.

#### **Eastern Mennonite Seminary**

Harrisonburg, Virginia, USA | <http://www.emu.edu>

### **Creation Care in Scripture and Church; Dr. Dorothy Jean Weaver**

This course will be a study (1) of biblical perspectives on the physical world (i.e., God's creation) that humans inhabit and on the divine mandate for humans to care for this world that God has created. It will be a study (2) of the practical implications of this biblical call to creation care for the present day life of the church. The course will include both study of the biblical evidence—both Old and New Testament—which addresses the issues of creation care and consideration of the theme of creation care as focused through the lenses, each in turn, of the various theological disciplines that make up the Eastern Mennonite Seminary curriculum. This course is open to persons with or without previous courses in Hebrew or Greek.

#### **Fuller Theological Seminary**

Pasadena, California, USA | <http://www.fuller.edu>

### **Christian Ethics (also taught in Spanish)**

This basic introduction to ethics aims to develop a systematic way of thinking about Christian morality, bringing biblically based convictions to bear on important moral problems. The course works to integrate ecological matters throughout the course, with "environmental topics" accounting for about one third of the course.

### **Creation Care and the Sabbath Economics; Dr. Hak Joon Lee**

This course studies the theological and ethical grounds and directives of creation care and Sabbath economics that inform our personal and corporate responsibility as the stewards of God's creation. The study includes 1) an analysis of the detrimental impact

of global capitalism on the ecology and 2) an exploration of appropriate spiritual formation, communal practices, and public policy proposals of creation care and the Sabbath economics in local, national, and global contexts.

### **Jesus, the Church, and Violence; Dr. Tommy Givens**

The course relates ecology to racial violence and oppression, biblical hermeneutics, and other topics. About one quarter of the course's material concerns "environmental topics" broadly conceived.

**Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary**  
Evanston, Illinois, USA | <http://www.garrett.edu>

### **Ecological Theology: God and Creation in Travail; Dr. Timothy Eberhart**

This course is a survey of major figures in the field of ecological theology over the past half century. Students will examine the development of contemporary theological reflection on the promises, dynamics, and sufferings of God and the creation by reading primary texts from a diversity of perspectives, including from Lutheran/Reformed, Trinitarian, Feminist, Catholic, Liberation, Evangelical, Womanist, and Process theologies.

### **Ethics of Hope in an Age of Crisis; Dr. Timothy Eberhart**

The context in which the Good News of Jesus Christ is to be lived and proclaimed today is marked by an increasing number of distinct but interrelated crises. Environmental devastation. Economic inequality. Political corruption. Financial indebtedness. Climatic disruption. Cultural disorientation. It is clear that serious Christian responses can be defined neither by naïve optimism, despairing cynicism, nor willful ignorance. But what is the lived witness of hope that Christians might offer the world, as individuals and congregations, amidst the crisis of this present age? This course draws upon a range of theological and critical perspectives in seeking to affirm an ethics of hope that is grounded in the promise of the resurrection, the history of faithful struggle, and the in-breaking energies of God's new creation.

### **Food, Faith, and Justice: Holy Communion for the Whole Creation; Dr. Timothy Eberhart**

God's call to participate in the abundant life of loving communion is given to us in the form of a meal invitation: "Take, eat (Matt. 26:26). "Taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps. 34:8). But how are we to gather together in holy meals when the food we consume is bound up in the earth's degradation and the exploitation of neighbors near and far? This course will integrate a critical theology of food and agriculture with practical encounters with the emerging holistic food economy (e.g. urban organic agriculture, community food cooperatives, and ecological garden design) in the Chicago area.

### **Moral Theology Topics: Oikos of God: Economy and Ecology in the Global Household; Dr. Timothy Eberhart**

This course is an introduction to theological reflection on economy and ecology in a globalized world. The Greek word for household is *oikos*, which means the words ecology (*oikos-logos*, the studied knowledge of our planetary household), economy (*oikos-nomos*, the management of the household), and ecumenicity (*oikou-menikos*, an openness to the worldwide household) all share a basic orientation to "home." There is growing awareness that the interconnected households we inhabit are increasingly marked, not by the kind of sustaining relations on which home life depends, but by various forms of injustice and degradation. There is also a growing recognition that the ecological and economic crises facing people worldwide are mutually constitutive and that singular, disconnected responses are therefore inadequate. The goal of this course is to draw upon diverse theological and ethical resources in thinking critically about the economic and ecological crises facing our common global household and constructively toward a more charitable, just, and sustainable future.

### **Resisting Biocide: Environmental Ethics for Discipleship; Dr. Timothy Eberhart**

The environmental crises facing human communities worldwide present a host of difficult moral questions for the Christian life. The overlapping problems of ecological degradation, resource depletion, climate disruption, and more – especially in relation to those already victimized by poverty and other forms of oppression – require critical, systemic reflection as well as transformative changes within each sphere of our personal, economic, ecclesial, and public lives today. This course will survey key thinkers and themes within the field of environmental ethics, examine proposals for faithful Christian action, and challenge students to articulate a hopeful vision for discipleship today that accounts not only for the breadth of sin and evil but also the depth of God's love for the world.

**George Fox Evangelical Seminary**  
Portland, Oregon, USA | <http://www.georgefox.edu/seminary>

### **Eschatology, New Creation, and Communal Ethics I**

This course addresses New Testament theologies of eschatology, Trinitarian community, soteriology, and Jesus' new kingdom. By considering the historical currents of these theologies, students will identify how this legacy relates to the current state of the world. Students will engage communal ethics and the role of the local Christian church in addressing ecological issues.

### **Eschatology, New Creation, and Communal Ethics II**

This course is a second-semester continuation of Eschatology, New Creation, and Communal Ethics I, which is a required prerequisite for this course.

### **Indigenous History and Mission (North America)**

This course provides an examination of the history of Christian mission among Indigenous peoples, current Indigenous life and Indigenous spiritualities in geographic regionally specific studies that connect to both global issues and local context. Students will explore issues such as the harmony ethic, building a theology of the land, indigenous religious practices, and how these all relate to the Christian faith.

### **Poverty and Restorative Earthkeeping**

This course immerses students during a five-day retreat in a setting that illustrates the integral relationships between earthkeeping, global systems, and issues such as racism, sexism, and poverty. Students will encounter the tension between the devastating nature of these relationships and the potential and hope for restoration of the created order.

### **Spirituality and the Earth**

Offered in a retreat format every other summer, this course explores the relationship of the student's spiritual life to the spiritual discipline of stewardship. Attention will be given to stewardship of self and of resources, but a particular focus will be made on the stewardship of creation. The seminar (in an outdoor setting) involves lecture, discussion, silent and written reflection, and small group interaction.

### **Theology and Ethic of the Land; Dr. Randy Woodley**

This course immerses students in the natural world during a five-day retreat. Students will abide in Creation and experience the beauty and hope of our immanent God. They will consider a Shalom and Native American understanding of the land and the relationship between science and faith. They will engage current issues such as agriculture, conservation, land use and consumption of natural resources.

### **Theology and Stewardship of Creation I**

This course seeks to wrestle with Old Testament theologies of creation, stewardship and the role of humanity in the created order. Students will engage the history and development of these ideas within the Church and consider how this legacy relates to the current state of the world. They will write their own eco-theology and create a spiritual practice that reflects it.

### **Theology and Stewardship of Creation II**

This course is a second-semester continuation of Theology and Stewardship of Creation I, which is a required prerequisite for this course.

#### **Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary**

South Hamilton, Massachusetts, USA | <http://www.gordonconwell.edu>

### **Christian Ethics & Social Issues**

Seeks to develop the student's theological-ethical reflections, social analysis, and types of action for ministering to crucial social issues. Our three-step approach will be: 1) clarification, 2) conceptualization, and 3) confrontation. Issues include: urbanization, economic justice, and environmental ethics.

#### **The Graduate Theological Union**

Berkeley, California, USA | <http://www.cdsp.edu/>

### **Theology, Economy, and Sustainability; Dr. Marion Grau**

In this course, we will examine the intersections between theology, economy, and sustainability. Creation can be conceptualized as a divine economy with complex interactions where 'oikos' refers to relations both in economy and ecology. In fact, we will be unable to live more sustainably on this planet without finding ways to bring the 'households' of economy and ecology into greater cohesion.

We will explore biblical and historical resources, theological and interreligious resources for the construction and implementation of sustainable theologies and practices.

**Harvard Divinity School**

Cambridge, Massachusetts USA | <http://hds.harvard.edu/>

**Introduction to Religion and Ecology; Dr. Daniel McKanan**

This course will explore the intersection between religious traditions and ecological activism, with special attention to current conversations about "ethical eating." We will consider both the resources that religious traditions provide to ecological activists and the ways these activists have challenges aspects of traditional religion. The course will also function as a general introduction to the multiple ways of knowing that comprise the scholarly study of religion, with attention to scriptural interpretation, history, ethnography, theology, ethics, and comparative studies.

**Green Buddhism: Faith, Ecology, and Activism; Dr. Lama Willa Miller**

This course examines the growing movement within the Buddhist community to address the issue of environmental degradation and climate change through the avenues of Buddhist ethics, theological discourse, and community activism. The class will read passages from ancient textual sources, beginning with the Pali Buddhist Canon and continuing into Buddhism's diaspora that frame nature as sacred, and that value the earth as a vehicle of religious reflection and practice. We will also look at modern discourses from Buddhist-inspired authors and teachers that call for activism, and those that consider a shift from an anthropocentric religion to nature-centric religion. The class will address topics such as the relationship between consumer culture, religion and the state of the environment in the 21st Century.

**Religion, Ecology and Human Rights; Rev. Diane Moore**, No course description found.

**Hebrew College**

Newton Centre, Massachusetts, USA | <http://www.hebrewcollege.edu/rabbinical>

**Jewish Living Core 2: Mo'ed Talmud C**

This course will focus on selected sections from Tractate Ta'anit of the Babylonian Talmud. We will focus on issues of the Jewish calendar, Nature and Theology, communal responsibility and mourning. We will study classic rabbinic texts and later responses to this text—both traditional and contemporary academic. This course is appropriate for students with advanced rabbinic text skills.

**Hebrew Union College, New York**

New York, New York, USA | <http://www.huc.edu>

**Jewish Roots of Sustainable Living; Dr. Michael Pitkowski**

Sustainable living is characterized by a concern for the environment, striving to have as small an impact as possible on nature, and using the minimal number of natural resources necessary. A sustainable approach to living is based upon certain beliefs about the importance of preserving the environment and minimizing the human impact on it. This spring 2015 course with Dr. Michael Pitkowski will examine the Jewish roots that support a sustainable living lifestyle. Students will look at the theological and textual sources of Jewish sustainable living, beginning with Biblical literature and continuing through to modern Jewish thinkers, exploring how different types of Jewish literature can provide guidance for the construction of a sustainable lifestyle.

**Holy Apostles College**

Cromwell, CT, USA | <http://www.holyapostles.edu/>

**Theology and Science, Dr. Tom Sheahen and Dr. Carla Mae Streeter**

This online course examines the relation between the disciplines and worldviews of modern science and Christian theology with the aim of providing a scientifically informed, theological understanding and appreciation of nature as God's work of creation.

**Luther Seminary**

St. Paul, Minnesota, USA | <http://www.luthersem.edu/>

**Bible and the Environment; Professor Kathryn Schifferdecker**

An examination of biblical texts that speak of creation and humanity's place in it. Special attention is paid to the topic of human vocation vis-a-vis creation, especially in light of contemporary environmental issues.



## **Religious Education in Relation to Creation**

A study of the educational issues raised by emerging environmental awareness, particularly in relation to questions of stewardship and justice. This course focuses on two primary contexts, the rural and the urban, considering specific examples of ways in which Christian educators can support congregational learning and ministry that embraces ecological literacy.

### **Theology, Environment, and Ethics; Rev. Alan Padgett**

This course investigates our current ecological crisis in the light of a biblically informed Christian ethic. It is equally a study in a Christian ethical interpretation of Scripture in the light of our current ecological crisis. A case study approach helps to ground a short introduction to ecology as well as a study of various models for a Christian ethic of creation care. The focus is on a critical theological reflection on praxis in a pluralistic world of many faiths and none at all, but in which we share a common, growing crisis.

**Lutheran School of Theology**  
Chicago, Illinois, USA | <http://www.lstc.edu>

### **Biblical Perspectives on Nature; Rev. Dr. Barbara Rossing & Dr. Theodore Hiebert**

The ultimate goal of this course is to consider a new way of thinking about religion, a way which takes the natural world seriously. More specifically, the goal is to consider this new way of thinking in relation to the Bible, and to examine what role nature plays in biblical thought. At the end of the course, we hope all of us will know better how to take creation seriously in our biblical interpretation, in our linking of the Bible and ministry, and in our practice of ministry itself.

### **Biomedical Ethics in a Multicultural World; Dr. Richard Perry**

This course critically examines contemporary bioethical issues from a multicultural perspective. Using case studies attention will be given to the application of various bioethical principles to a variety of issues in biomedical ethics including but not limited to justice in health care, genetic counseling and screening, environmental influence on public health, human experimentation, genetics, euthanasia, end of life and other contemporary health problems.

### **Dust to Dust: Ritual and Theology of Human Earth Boundedness; Dr. Benjamin Stewart**

Some Christian funerary practices embody unity with the earth ("earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust"), while others suggest a trajectory away from earth ("set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth," toward a "heavenly home"). This course studies ritual practices at death as centrally embodying convictions about human relationship with the earth and with God. The course traces a number of themes toward their intersection at funeral rituals: theology of the cross, incarnation and embodiment, ecological theology, and liturgical theology. The course especially focuses on the emerging natural burial movement: placing it in historical context, analyzing it theologically, and equipping course members to be leaders in articulating and introducing its practices for the church and the wider community."

### **Ecology and the Bible; Rev. Dr. Chilkuri Vasantha Rao**

The present global ecological crisis is often alleged to be the outcome of the Judeo-Christian understanding of the Holy Scriptures. This calls students of the Bible to undertake a serious exegetical study, especially of the Pentateuch with its rich "Law Codes," as well as a general investigation of the Bible as a whole, in order to be able to understand God's concern for every living being and preservation of the whole created order.

The course entails close study of biblical texts – but doing so in a conversation that embraces perspectives of Christians from North America, South Asia with particular reference to India and other parts of the world. Hence it aims to advance students' competency in both the areas of "Religious Heritage – Scripture" and "Cultural Context".

### **Epic of Creation: Scientific, Biblical, and Theological Perspectives on Our Origins; Dr. Gayle Woloschak**

The Epic of Creation invites scientists and scholars of religion to present their professional perspectives on the scientific, biblical, and theological stories of the origins of the universe, life, and human beings.

### **The Future of Creation; Dr. Gayle Woloschak & Rev. Dr. Barbara Rossing**

This interdisciplinary course will prepare seminary students to offer informed and engaged leadership in response to environmental challenges for the future. The course includes a strong scientific component, with guest lecturers from the science faculties of the Chicago-area universities and research centers. It also integrates theological responses to science – particularly climate change science – presented by theology and biblical professors from local seminaries, in order to help prepare students make connections between the knowledge of science and faith traditions.

Class discussions will prepare students to preach and teach on theology, ethics and ministry related to environmental issues, and to counsel parishioners. Community organizations will orient students to the collaborative network that will facilitate congregational action for environmental ministry.

**Religious Responses to Environmental Injustice; Dr. Benjamin Stewart**

This course explores how various religious communities are responding to environmental injustice. The course begins by studying specific local religious communities engaged in creation care and environmental justice. These faith communities then serve as reference points from which the course takes up larger questions of eco-theology and ethics, public religious leadership, and interfaith work for justice.

**Wilderness Travel Seminar to Holden Village: Liturgy and the Cycles of Creation; Dr. Benjamin Stewart**

Held in January in a remote Lutheran retreat center in the Glacier Peak Wilderness of Washington, this course studies how daily prayer and the liturgical year relate to the ecological cycles of the earth. Drawing on the fields of liturgical studies, ecotheology, and education; practicing a cycle of daily prayer; and spending considerable time outdoors, course members develop skills for interpreting liturgy in an ecological and missional era.

**Lutheran Seminary Program in the Southwest**  
Columbia, South Carolina, USA | <http://ltss.lr.edu/>

**Earth Theology: Environmental Perspectives on Creation, Redemption, and Spirituality; Dr. Faye Schott**

This course will investigate the recent history of theological attention to the earth and its ecological systems, human impact on the environment, and biblical and spiritual resources for addressing the present crisis of global development and sustainability.

**Visceral Theology; Dr. Eliseo Pérez-Álvarez**

Biblical-historical approach to eatables and drinkables and the role they have played in the theological task. The menu includes: *Deus edens* or the God who eats and feeds; Theology of the cross and bread; Covenant vs. food terrorism; Taste conquest through the Eucharist; Hospitality over gastro-anomy and gastro-mania; Vegetarianism-femininity heresy; transubstantiation or trangenization; The liturgical-agricultural calendar; Gastronomical spirituality; Culinary predestination; Spicy heavenography; The most exquisite utopia: an open table.

**Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg**  
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, USA | <http://www.ltsg.edu>

**Environment & Religion in Northern Appalachia (Immersion Seminar); Rev. Dr. Gilson Waldkoenig**

Northern Appalachia is home to deeply-rooted local cultures in a beautiful landscape. Conflicts defined by environmental and economic issues are fierce for both communities and churches. This seminar will give students an inside look and an opportunity to strategize for dealing with conflict in and around ministry. The environmental history of the landscape's use and abuse, the shape of human cultures expressed by people of different traditions, and the history of tightly held religious patterns, will frame discussions with religious, environmental and industrial leaders from the region. The course meets at Lutherlyn in Butler, PA, and makes day trips in the region.

**Ecology & Stewardship; Rev. Dr. Gilson Waldkoenig**

Participation in God's creation offers renewal in Christian practice. Congregations and other ministries are discovering cost-saving energy reduction and new ways to foster community through sustainability measures and ecological restoration. This course begins with practical responses to environmental challenges and extends to spirituality and public theology related to environment.

**Environmental Ethics & Faith; Rev. Dr. Gilson Waldkoenig**

From chemical spills to atmospheric carbon overload, environmental problems are common concerns in global society. How shall people of faith respond to the theological, pastoral and social justice challenges posed by environmental problems? This course will read and analyze a recent monumental statement of religious environmental ethics by Lutheran ethicist Larry Rasmussen, *Earth-Honoring Faith: Religious Ethics in a New Key*; study the precedent-setting work of Lutheran theologian Joseph Sittler in ecological theology and ethics; and relate classical Reformation and Christian theological themes to current resources on ecology and religion,

so that participants may hone their theological stance for preaching, teaching and pastoral ministry in an environmentally troubled world.

**Lutheran Theological Seminary and the Zygon Center**  
Chicago, Illinois, USA | <http://www.zygoncenter.org>

**The Future of Creation: Foundations for a Just and Sustainable World; Rev. Dr. Gayle Woloschak & Dr. David Rhoads**

To live faith in today's world, we need to face today's problems. This course will address the challenges that environmental degradation poses for the near future. We face numerous ecological crises: climate change, ozone loss, overuse of natural resources, loss of species/ecosystems, proliferation of waste, over-population, among others. What are the basic scientific understandings of these problems? How much of this ecological state of the world is due to human activity? And how can this scientific information serve as a basis for humans to make wise decisions about our future?

**McCormick Theological Seminary**  
Chicago, Illinois, USA | <http://www.mccormick.edu>

**Food: From Table Grace to the Politics of Food Distribution; Deborah J. Kapp**

Through a focus on urban religious organizations, this course will help students to identify the multiple challenges ministers face (and the approaches they might employ) as they respond to Jesus' command, "You give them something to eat" (Mk. 6:37). Jesus said this to his disciples when they became anxious about the hunger of the 5000 people who had gathered to hear Jesus. The disciples are not the first or last folks to be concerned about how to feed large groups who are without access to the food they need. Generals have worried about how to feed armies. People of compassion have agonized about how to provide food for victims of famine or natural disasters. Leaders in urban communities have struggled with the challenges of providing adequate food for the people who have crowded into cities.

**Globalization and Food; Dr. Deborah Kapp & Dr. Theodore Hiebert**

Perhaps more than other contemporary issues, globalization presents challenges to Christian life, raising questions about everything from what we buy to how we make financial investments, from our treatment of creation to our political involvement. And, to be sure, it raises questions about what we eat. "You are what you eat," it is sometimes said. If that's true, then we are citizens of a globalized world in which we reap what we do not sow, eat from one another's tables, and shape each other's lives in ways both hidden and apparent. Through field trips, class readings and discussions, and direct engagement with rural and urban partners, this course uses food as a case study to understand some of the key dynamics of globalization and to develop faithful Christian responses to this complex context.

**Job and his Modern Interpreters; Theodore Hiebert**

The aim of this course is to understand the book of Job and its lasting significance. In order to accomplish this aim, the course will include two parts: a study of the book of Job in the context of the biblical world, and an examination of responses to Job by contemporary writers.

**Meadville Lombard Theological School**  
Chicago, Illinois, USA | <http://www.meadville.edu/>

**The Big Blue Marble: Theology and Globalization; Dr. Michael Hogue**

First, as indicated above, globalization includes not only material but also cultural dimensions. Not every interpreter of globalization acknowledges this, and even for those who do, the role of religions in culture is often downplayed. For many scholars, and even more so for the broader public, globalization is usually described as a principally economic-material process. This course constitutes an effort to understand globalization as more than the global interconnection and interdependence of markets and finance and to understand the material dimensions of globalization as part of a much broader set of patterns.

**Cosmos and Ethos: Religious Naturalism and the Climate Crisis; Dr. Michael Hogue**

This course explores religious naturalism (RN) in relation to the climate crisis and climate justice. We will engage the climate crisis as a geophysical and planetary reality, a moral phenomenon, a religious concern, a social justice tragedy, and a problem of political economy. A primary purpose of the course is thus to help students develop an understanding of RN by considering it not only in philosophical, theological, and scientific contexts but also as a resource for creative response to contemporary social, moral and political challenges.

## **Ecology and Theology**

Exploring the interconnections between religious values, theology and a life of practice, this course focuses on congregational and personal practices of faith. Environmental practice is the occasion for learning a discipline and approach of practice of faith in a congregational context and other contexts. Topics include developing an attitude of practice, concrete examples of faith in practice at Faith in Place and other non-profits in Chicago, and practical skills such as organizing in the congregation, and writing grant proposals.

### **Environmental Ethics: Bios, Anthropos, Theos; Dr. Michael Hogue**

For various reasons, this time in the history of life is one of unparalleled promise and peril. Our increasing human capacity to intervene within and to alter the larger world of life presents us with grave practical challenges. Where in previous historical times the natural world was interpreted as a relatively stable backdrop to human behavior, contemporary human efficacy is now capable not only of radically altering but of possibly destroying the conditions necessary to sustain life.

Further, new possibilities in genetic science and technology mean that human life has crossed a moral threshold from being not only an agent but also an object of technological change. Life, human and other-than-human, is more vulnerable than ever before. A multitude of theological and ethical implications attend these radical shifts in the scope and power of human action. The primary aim of this course is to bring the gravity of these implications to visibility in order better to respond to them.

### **Globalization, Religion, Ethics; Dr. Michael Hogue**

This course interrogates the relations among globalization, religion, and ethics in two steps, analytic and constructive. Our purposes during these sessions include the attempt to understand whether “globalization” is something “new under the sun,” perhaps a late-, hyper-, or post-modern phenomenon. Understanding this will require that some attention be given to the question of how “globalization” and modernity interrelate. So also it will be important to consider the constitutive economic or material and cultural dynamics of “globalization,” some of its ecological impacts, and the ways in which it generates different forms of social life and modes of thinking. The underlying analytic question through this part of the course will be that of how the concepts and forms of “religion” and “globalization” implicate and/or (re-)constitute one another.

**Methodist Theological School in Ohio**  
Delaware, Ohio, USA | <http://www.mtso.edu/>

### **Connections in Ecology and Religious Education; Dr. Timothy Van Meter**

A course exploring harmonies and dissonance between models of religious and ecological education. It is designed for individuals who are seeking ways to integrate ecological issues as an aspect of the educational life of a vibrant community.

### **Dialogues in Faith and Science**

The purpose of this course is to engage in meaningful discourse between science and theology for the purpose of developing a thoughtful, relevant faith conversant with scientific discovery and progress. Contemporary discoveries in neuroscience, cosmology, anthropology, evolutionary theory, genetics and ecological sciences all offer opportunities for engaging understanding of faith. Two or three scientific areas will be chosen for dialogue with the Christian faith traditions.

### **Ecological Religious Education; Dr. Randy Litchfield & Dr. Timothy Van Meter**

This course explores harmonies and dissonance between models of religious and ecological education. It is designed for individuals who are seeking ways to integrate ecological issues as an aspect of the educational life of a vibrant community.

### **Food, Land and Faith Formation; Dr. Randy Litchfield & Dr. Timothy Van Meter**

Through urban gardening, community supported agriculture, farmer’s markets or intentional agrarian communities, young people are constructing new relationships with food, land, and community. In doing so, they are exploring understandings of faith and spirituality through ideas and metaphors reflecting their commitments to community and agrarian values.

### **Practical Theology and Ecology; Dr. Randy Litchfield & Dr. Timothy Van Meter, No course description found.**

### **Resisting Biocide: Environmental Ethics for Discipleship; Dr. Randy Litchfield & Dr. Timothy Van Meter**

The environmental crises facing human communities worldwide present a host of difficult moral questions for the Christian life. The overlapping problems of ecological degradation, resource depletion, climate disruption, and more – especially in relation to those already victimized by poverty and other forms of oppression – require critical, systemic reflection as well as transformative changes

within each sphere of our personal, economic, ecclesial, and public lives today. This course will survey key thinkers and themes within the field of environmental ethics, examine proposals for faithful Christian action, and challenge students to articulate a hopeful vision for discipleship today that accounts not only for the breadth of sin and evil but also the depth of God's love for the world.

**Worship, Ecology and Social Justice;** *Dr. Randy Litchfield & Dr. Timothy Van Meter*, No course description found.

**North Park Theological Seminary**

Chicago, Illinois, USA | <http://www.northpark.edu/seminary>

**Thought of Wendell Berry;** *Dr. Jay Phelan & Dr. Brent Laytham*

An exploration of Berry's wisdom through representative reading in his fiction, poetry and essays. The course engages key Berrian themes and explores the compatibility and contribution of Berry's vision to contemporary Christian life and thought.

**Wilderness and Faith;** *Dr. Jay Bruckner, Dr. Michelle Clifton-Soderstrom, & Dr. Phil Anderson*

An offsite experiential course based on substantial reading and reflection that explores the theme of wilderness in relation to the Bible, Christian history, theology, and spirituality, as well as the American context of stewardship and a land ethic. Set in the Iron Range in the upper peninsula of Michigan; includes a wilderness experience on the Flambeau River and local trails.

**Oblate School of Theology**

San Antonio, Texas, USA | <http://www.ost.edu/>

**Earth Insights: A Nature-Based Christian Spirituality Building on the Work of Teilhard de Chardin**

This course draws from Christian Tradition and contemporary science to explore the Christian journey. In this course students will reflect on the relevance of dynamics that occur at all levels of creation (Cosmic, Earth, and Human) and apply them to the Christian spiritual path. The work of Brian Swimme, Steven Chase, and Brennan Hills form the backbone of the course.

**Payne Theological Seminary**

Wilberforce, Ohio, USA | <http://www.payne.edu/>

**Eco-Justice and the Christian Faith;** *Rev. Dr. Janet Parker*

This course explores contemporary work in eco-justice theology, eco-feminism, Native American and third world scholarship, and the sustainability movement. Questions concerning the place and role of human beings within creation, understandings of God and Christ, economic globalization, conflicting uses of public lands, environmental racism, classism and sexism, and the struggle for nurturing sustainable and just communities are considered. The emphasis is upon constructive theological and ethical reflection upon the global problematic of environmental degradation and injustice.

**Princeton Theological Seminary**

Princeton, New Jersey, USA | <http://www.ptsem.edu>

**Toward a Theology of Creation and Environmental Responsibility Creation and Ecology;** *Rev. William Stacy Johnson*

This course develops a theology of creation in response to the urgency of the ecological crisis. Seeking to properly understand the relationship of God, humanity, and the world, it considers such issues as: stewardship of the earth; debates over climate change and sustainability; the interplay of environmental and social justice. It seeks to understand these issues through the lens of major themes in Christian theology (e.g. the water crisis and baptismal life; the food crisis in the light of the Lord's Supper, etc.). The goal is to cultivate a sense of environmental responsibility and to explore how to live more fully into the conviction that "the earth is the LORD's and all that is in it." (Psalm 24:1)

**Reconstructionist Rabbinical College**

Wyncote, Pennsylvania, USA | <http://www.rrc.edu>

**Food Justice;** *Rabbi Mordechai Liebling & Rev. Katie Day*

This course will examine the production, consumption and distribution of food and food's connection to our physical, emotional and spiritual lives. The course will explore traditional Jewish and Christian teachings about food in relationship to eco-kashrut and current food justice and sustainability issues.

**Rabbis as Activist Leaders for Environmental Sustainability and Justice;** *Rabbi Mordechai Liebling*



The course will combine text, experiential exercises, and activist involvement. It will cover fundamental teachings on Judaism and the environment, a deepening of our personal connection to the earth, and the basics of nonviolent direct action. A unique and influential component will be activism. During the course of the semester, all matriculated students will be required to devote at least eight hours to an environmental campaign.

**Regent College**

Vancouver, BC, Canada | <http://www.regent-college.edu>

**Food: Communion, Community, and Creation**

Eating is one of the most profound ways we are related to each other, to the created world, and to God. Within the framework of Christian theology, consider some of the biological, ecological, psychological, aesthetic, spiritual, agricultural, and economic aspects of what, why, and how we eat. This course takes place on Galiano Island, and is offered in partnership with A Rocha Canada.

**Living in Creation: Theory and Practice**

The purpose of this course is 1) to explore the Biblical, theological, and philosophical foundations for our actions in and towards the created world (that's the "theory" part) and 2) to consider some of the ways one might build more deliberately on those foundations in a variety of areas: science, art, technology, "earthkeeping", etc. (that's the "practice" part). Foundational beliefs about the nature of the cosmos (usually unexplored) are a universal human trait. The pressing contemporary need for Christians to think about them comes from three things: first, the deep divide between theistic (on the one hand) and a-theistic or pantheistic foundations for culture (on the other); second, the increasing crisis of human relationship to creation; third, the generally shallow treatment given the doctrine of creation in much Christian thought and practice, and a widespread difficulty in reconciling it with much more deeply-considered theologies of redemption.

**Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity at Saint Thomas University**

St. Paul, Minnesota, USA | <http://www.stthomas.edu/spssod/>

**Principles of Stewardship and Sustainability**

This course will provide the occasion to consider the complex issue of "environmental stewardship" from the perspectives of traditional Catholic theses concerning the meaning of creation and the status of the human person within it. Special emphasis is given to the Thomistic categories of natural philosophy and theology. The seminar course will include common readings to be discussed at each class in light of fundamental themes developed throughout the whole.

**Saint Paul School of Theology**

Leawood, Kansas, USA | <http://www.spst.edu/>

**Theology of Growing and Eating; Dr. Shannon Jung**

The Theology of Growing and Eating is an experiential and experimental course which will use traditional materials such as lectures and small group discussions; electronic or visual media; and actual manual labor and reflection on these experiences to discover what (all) it means that human beings eat and grow. There are elements of ecology, of attempting to communicate with our neighborhood, and also of ministry practice in the course.

**San Francisco Theological Seminary**

San Anselmo, California, USA | <http://www.sfts.edu>

**Environmental Ethics; Dr. Carol Robb**

An introduction to the discipline of Christian ethics, and to the literature of environmental ethics. We will approach the question of how to act responsibly and ecologically using public policy, philosophical, and theological perspectives. The focus issue this semester is this: FOOD.

**Environmental Ethics: Focus on Biodiversity; Dr. Carol Robb & Dr. Marilyn Matevia,** No course description found.

**Santa Clara University**

Santa Clara, California, USA | <http://www.scu.edu/jst/>

**Environmental Justice in the Catholic Imagination: The Central Valley; Dr. Keith Douglass Warner OFM**

This class investigates the religious, ethical, and social meanings of environmental justice.

### **Faith, Ethics & the Biodiversity Crisis; Dr. Keith Douglass Warner OFM**

The present collapse of Earth's biodiversity is a major issue facing human society. Members of all religions are responding as part of the "Greening of Religions," also known as religious environmentalism, based on religious environmental ethics. A quarter-long research project drives our intellectual work in this class. This class investigates the How have the religions of the world reinterpreted their tradition (or how could they) so as to play a leadership role in conservation of biodiversity. This question emerges from your instructor's curiosity, research, and teaching over many years. This research question is broken down into discrete tasks, with mileposts throughout the quarter.

### **The Moral Vision of César Chavez; Dr. Keith Douglass Warner OFM**

This course presents the vocation of César Chavez to investigate the dramatic changes have taken place in our modern agro-food system over the past century. Chavez was profoundly influenced by a Catholic vision of society, and this played a key role in inspiring him to organize Mexican farm workers to fight for their dignity. He addressed human rights, racism, labor organizing, farm workers' conditions, environmental protection, food safety, and food access; through his moral vision and agency he challenged people around the world to do the same. This course will provide an overview of Catholic perspectives on agriculture, food, and the environment, but also labor organizing and immigration, to examine how Chavez went about achieving this vision using a spirituality of nonviolence. Class assignments will probe his spiritual and moral vision, and explore how it is – or could be – carried forward today.

**Spirituality & Sustainability,** No course description found.

### **Vocational Challenge & the Greening of Religions; Dr. Keith Douglass Warner OFM**

We will intensively examine the issue of global climate disruption since this is the most ominous threat to sustainability efforts. The course will introduce the concept of climate justice, and student will make an iMovie about a spirituality approach to this topic. This course will tackle the "why" questions, such as: why should we consider future generations in our actions? Why should we re-think and re-design our energy economy?

#### **Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry**

Seattle, Washington, USA | <http://www.seattleu.edu/stm/>

### **Ecological Spirituality; Dr. Alexandra Kovats**

Humankind in our day faces a moral challenge never before encountered by our species. It is to forge ways of living that Earth can sustain while also building social justice between and among societies. Thomas Berry refers to building sustainable Earth-human relations as the Great Work of our era. When something new is required of humankind something new is required of religion. It is to discover how religious traditions can contribute to this great work and then bring the spiritual and moral wisdom and other resources of religious traditions to this pan-human great work of our day. Students and professor in this course will explore collaboratively these resources within Christian traditions. Said differently, we will explore pathways for shaping Earth-honoring faiths and ways of living in the context of the socio-ecological crisis facing humankind today. Participants will probe the connections between moral anthropology, theological cosmology, faith, science, and central theological concepts. The methodological lens will be Christian ethics, and the primary religious lens will be Christianities (plural). The course will approach religious traditions with a hermeneutic of critique, retrieval, and reconstruction.

#### **Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary**

Wake Forest, North Carolina, USA | <http://www.sbts.edu>

### **Christian Ethics and the Environment**

A study of biblical and theological perspectives iconoclastic controversy of the Protestant Reformation, important Protestant visual artists and their work, visual art and Protestant worship, and the history of Protestantism, and the rise of modern visual culture.

#### **Truett Theological Seminary – Baylor**

Waco, Texas, USA | <https://www.baylor.edu/truett/>

### **Wendell Berry: Creation, Stewardship, and Spiritual Life; Dr. R Robert Creech**

In this course a special topic related to Christian spirituality will be explored in a focused and intensive way. The topics vary from semester to semester and students may take this course more than once as topics change. E.g., one semester's seminar involved a

careful, charitable, and critical reading of selections of Wendell Berry's essays, poetry, and fiction, seeking to understand the perspective of his new agrarian thought and its implications for creation care, community, spiritual life, and ministry.

**Union Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education (Richmond Campus)**

Richmond, Virginia, USA | <http://www.upsem.edu/>

**Ecology and Hope; Dr. Henry Simmons**, No course description found.

**Union Theological Seminary**

New York City, New York, USA | <https://utsnyc.edu/>

**Eco-Feminism and Earth Spirituality around the World; Dr. Chung Hyun Kyung**

This course examines the origins, development, content, and critical issues of various forms of eco-feminism and earth spiritualities around the world. Engagement with important oral, written, and visual texts. Visitation and discussion with local and international activists will be arranged. We will also rediscover and practice the rituals of earth spirituality.

**Vancouver School of Theology**

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada | <http://www.vst.edu>

**Climate Change and Christian Faith; Dr. Sallie McFague**

Scientists now say “unequivocally” that global warming is here and they have “very high confidence” that human activity is forcing up the earth’s average temperature (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007). Climate change is the quintessential issue of our time, since it affects all aspects of planetary life. The twin issues of the deterioration of our environment and the impoverishment of its creatures—the issues of sustainability and distributive justice—join in climate change. It is an economic, social, biological, medical, legal, educational, moral—and theological—issue. It sets the context within which Christian theology needs to be deconstructed and reconstructed for our time. More specifically, the issue of climate change should serve as a major focus for reconsidering the doctrines of Christian faith: revelation and creation, human nature, God, Jesus Christ, sin and salvation, the Holy Spirit, discipleship, sacraments and church, and hope.

**Wake Forest University School of Divinity**

Winston Salem, North Carolina, USA | <http://divinity.wfu.edu>

**Contemporary Christian Social Ethics; Professor Kevin Jung**

This course explores contemporary ethical issues that have wide social, political, and religious significance. The issues include health care, environment, immigration, sex and marriage, abortion, euthanasia, and criminal justice. In order to properly understand the issues, we will examine arguments of various kinds – philosophical, sociological, political, economic, and theological, as they are often heard in public discussion. In particular, we will pay close attention to the ways in which theological discourse may make contribution to our moral reflection.

**Faith, Food Justice, and Local Communities; Professor Rev. Mark Jensen**

Questions of food access have become prevalent in many dimensions of public and communal life. Researchers have discovered ways to “track” food access in communities and neighborhoods. Congregations and not-for-profits are developing varied programmatic responses to issues of food access in their communities. This course explores issues of food access, food justice, and faith using insights and tools both from research sciences and theology. One course goal is to increase student awareness of the questions being posed by research scientists, theological educators, and faith communities. A second course goal is to equip students with practical and reflective tools for effectively leading faith communities to think theologically about and respond effectively to this pressing public issue.

**Field, Table, Communion: Food and the Work of Ministry; Dr. Fred Bahnson**

An exploration of food through scriptural and theological lenses. Students will learn to recognize the difference between healthy and destructive farming practices. Students examine the rise of faith-based food projects in America and around the world. The course looks at why hunger and obesity are flip sides of the same coin and considers how the church should respond to them.

**A Language that can Make us Whole: Reading and Writing Environmental Literature; Dr. Fred Bahnson**

How can stories help us regain a sense of the world as holy, mysterious, and worthy of our care? How can language, especially as it’s used by people of faith and people called environmentalists, be used to heal and mend what is daily being torn asunder? Could it be that what we need now in this time of climate change and food insecurity is not more information, but better stories? Join us as

writers Janisse Ray and Fred Bahnson talk about their work, which combines a rooted spirituality with a commitment to social change, and how stories can inspire people to care for their watersheds, foodsheds, and the people who inhabit them.

**Thriving Nourishment: Christian Spiritual Practices and Food; Dr. Nancy S. Wiens**

Whatever we practice shapes our lives from the minutest levels within a human being to the greatest macro levels of culture and nature. Christian spirituality studies daily, lived experience through the lens of God's incarnate self-revelation. This course explores personal and corporate Christian spiritual practices, as daily ways to contribute to thriving social and ecological systems, specifically the human-nature relationship called food. It delves into the insights of Christian spirituality in dialogue with three natural sciences for the purpose of inviting students to know themselves as Nature, as created co-creators, and as God's Beloved; and to develop conscious life practices that nourish their relationship with the divine, themselves, and their neighbors, both human and natural, and that create more redemptive food systems where God's shalom becomes visible for a hungry world.

**Daily Bread: Food, Faith, Mercy, and Justice; Professor Rev. Mark Jensen**

This course serves as an introduction and foundation for WFUSD's concentration in Food, Faith, and Religious Leadership. It utilizes an interdisciplinary approach to explore (primarily Christian) theological perspectives on food and how individuals and congregations engage issues in local and global communities related to food. Faculty and other guests will offer perspectives and resources from a variety of theological disciplines, and community members involved in the intersections of food and faith will embody models of action and engagement.

**Food, Faith, and Health: Navigating the Intersections in Community; Professor Rev. Mark Jensen**

This course is required for students pursuing either concentration in Well-Being and Religious Leadership (Food and Faith or Faith and Health). It seeks to develop leadership skills applicable to either congregational or not-for-profit ministries. It utilizes interdisciplinary conceptual lenses and methods to introduce participants to food systems and health systems as overlapping "loci" for understanding brokenness and cultivating shalom in community. Students will interact with community leaders, local data, and faith-based initiatives working at these intersections.

**Wartburg Theological Seminary**

Dubuque, Iowa, USA | <http://www.wartburgseminary.edu>

**Ethics, Environment, and Development; Rev. Dr. Duane Larson**

This course will direct systematic theological and practical reflection toward environmental issues and sustainable technologies for development. Further, the course will explore and suggest solutions for ethical problems related to economic globalization, southern hemisphere development and the health of the environment from global and local perspectives. Readings, presentations, and brief papers will first acquaint us with the theological, ethical, economic, and developmental issues regarding the preservation of "the creation."

**Wesley Theological Seminary**

Washington, DC, USA | <http://www.wesleyseminary.edu>

**The Church and the Ecological Crisis; Dr. Greg Hitzhusen & Dr. Beth Norcross**

Church leaders around the world are calling upon the faithful to address the moral dimensions of ecological degradation, and a growing community of theologians claims that the destruction of the earth is the "central moral imperative of our times." Accordingly, this course seeks to explore the role of the church in addressing ecological concerns, and to equip pastors and other Christian leaders with the theological, spiritual, and practical tools they will need to lead their congregations in faithfully responding to this moral imperative.

**Greening Congregations; Dr. Beth Norcross**

In a time of increasing uncertainty regarding the health of our planet, pastors and church leaders need the theological and practical skills to lead their congregations in responding to the ecological challenge. This course offers an overview of the theological and spiritual background regarding our personal and corporate responsibility to be stewards of creation, then emphasizes the very practical ways that our stewardship commitment can be carried out in the local church setting.

**Liturgics: Ecology and Worship; Dr. Joseph Bush**

This course brings an ecological hermeneutic to bear on texts and practices used in worship. These are examined for ways in which nature is pictured as present or absent, participating or passive. Particular attention is given to the seasons surrounding Christmas and Easter and implications of ecologically informed worship for Christology.

### **Spirituality in Nature; *Dr. Beth Norcross***

Through the study of spiritual practice and ecology, students will grow in their understanding of how Christians can relate more intimately and harmoniously with the creation and with the Creator. On-the-ground study and experience of our local Chesapeake Bay watershed will provide opportunities to get to know, delight in, and have compassion for, all of our neighbors, from the black bears who live in the headwaters, to the oyster farmers who call the estuary home. Opportunities for spiritual awakening and healing for humans as well as the local natural systems will be explored.

#### **Yale Divinity School**

New Haven, Connecticut, USA | <http://divinity.yale.edu>

### **Introduction to Religion and Ecology; *Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim***

This six-week hybrid course introduces the newly emerging field of religion and ecology and traces its development over the past several decades. It explores human relations to the natural world as differentiated in religious and cultural traditions. In particular, it investigates the symbolic and lived expressions of these interconnections in diverse religious texts, ethics, and practices. In addition, the course draws on the scientific field of ecology for an understanding of the dynamic processes of Earth's ecosystems. The course explores parallel developments in human-Earth relations defined as religious ecologies. Similarly, it identifies narratives that orient humans to the cosmos, namely, religious cosmologies.

### **Western Religions and Ecology; *Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim***

This six-week hybrid course explores views of nature in the Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Students examine historical examples of human-Earth interactions expressed in scriptures, traditions, and ritual practices. In particular, they explore the meaning of "dominion" in Judaism, "stewardship" in Christianity, and "trusteeship" in Islam. Having retrieved these examples, they evaluate them in light of present environmental insights and challenges. Students also explore contemporary examples of how these religions are engaged in environmental projects within their different communities. In these ways students come to reflect upon values inherent in these religions that have helped to shape and inform cultural interactions with nature in the West.

### **Christianity and Ecology; *Matthew Riley***

This course explores the ways in which Christianity is responding to environmental degradation from an interdisciplinary perspective. In this course, we will draw upon insights from theology, ethics, the history of religion, the sociology of religion, and philosophy. While we will examine the role that religious ideas and values play in shaping Christian attitudes and actions towards the environment, we will also consider the lived-experiences of Christians facing environmental problems. Students will be introduced to the major theologies and strategies for action that Christians are creating while simultaneously assessing the effectiveness of such strategies and examining the growth of pragmatic, on-the-ground responses. This is intended to be an introduction to a broad spectrum of issues residing at the intersection of Christianity and ecology.

### **Christianity and Environmental Ethics; *Matthew Riley***

The purpose of this course is to provide an introduction to core questions and moral frameworks in environmental ethics as they relate to Christianity. This course will explore how scholars, activists, and religious leaders have created and refined Christian responses to environmental problems. In order to develop a deeper understanding of not only the promise of environmental ethics, but also its efficacy and theoretical underpinnings, this course invites students to critically assess the effectiveness of these strategies and to be analytical in the examination of proposed solutions. Moreover, students in this course will explore how various ethics and worldviews arose historically in conversation with environmental philosophy and in response to contemporary ecological and theological concerns. Special attention will be given to understanding, critically assessing, and applying the fundamental methodology that undergirds environmental ethics as read through the lens of Christian theology and religious moral reasoning.

### **East Asian Religions and Ecology; *Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim***

This six-week hybrid course explores views of nature in the East Asian religions of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Students examine historical examples of human-Earth interactions expressed in scriptures, traditions, and ritual practices. In particular, they explore the meaning of "harmony" in Confucianism, "the Way" in Daoism, and "interdependence" in Buddhism. Having retrieved these examples, they evaluate them in light of present environmental insights and challenges. Students also explore contemporary examples of how these religions are engaged in environmental projects within their different communities. In these ways students come to reflect upon values inherent in these religions that have helped to shape and inform cultural interactions with nature in East Asia.



**South Asian Religions and Ecology;** *Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim*, No course description found.

**Indigenous Religions and Ecology;** *John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker*

This course explores how particular indigenous peoples relate to local bioregions and biodiversity. Opening with an examination of such terms as indigenous, religion, and ecology, the course investigates religious studies and ethnography related to small-scale societies and the many ways in which they relate to local bioregions and biodiversity. The course examines indigenous ethnic diversity and cultural relationships to place, and the ways values associated with physical places are articulated in symbols, myths, rituals, and other embodied practices. The emphasis on place and religious ecology in this course illustrates what indigenous peoples could bring to studies in environmental culture. Finally, this course necessarily involves questions of environmental justice, namely, the imposition of environmentally damaging projects on a people whose voice in decision making is diminished or eliminated.

**American Indian Religions and Ecology;** *Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim*

This course focuses on the North American continent from the standpoint of religion and ecology. A cultural-historical method is also used in conjunction with comparative-thematic and worldview approaches. These approaches emphasize embodied knowledge as a way of understanding native continuities in relationship with bioregions over time. Comparisons are also drawn between Native American traditions, and the concept of "lifeway" is developed as central to the course. In highlighting indigenous ways of knowing, the course focuses on conceptual metaphors of sharing, holism, reciprocity, and personhood. These modes of indigenous metaphoric thought are examined in terms of diverse rituals and oral statements describing the natural world.

**Law, Environment, and Religion: A Communion of Subjects;** *John Grim, Douglas A. Kysar, and Mary Evelyn Tucker*

To understand and appreciate the environment requires expertise from multiple intellectual traditions, including history, religion, philosophy, anthropology, aesthetics, economics, political science, and legal studies. This course focuses on the scholarship and practice of leading figures working at the intersection of law, environment, and religion, who will be brought to campus to participate in a discussion series that forms the core of the course. In preparation for these visits, teams of students are assigned to study deeply the writing and actions of a designated speaker. Class sessions during this preparatory phase resemble a traditional graduate seminar, with readings and discussion designed to stimulate engagement with the most challenging and vital questions facing the "communion" of law, environment, and religion. The central activity is an in-depth interview led by members of the student team. Other students conduct a podcast interview with the speaker at Yale's audio recording studio; these podcast interviews, which are intended to engage the speaker in a more personal conversation about his or her life history, values, and worldviews, will be posted on Yale's iTunes University site. One of the conceits of the academy is often that such subjective elements have little bearing on one's intellectual work. As a result, too little attention is paid within the university to the role of family, community, religion, and other critical biographical factors in shaping one's ideas.

**American Environmental History and Values;** *John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker*

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of major figures, ideas, and institutions in American environmentalism. The course explores the development of environmental awareness in America as distinct historical strands with diverse ethical concerns. It begins with an examination of Native American perspectives on land and biodiversity. We then focus on writings from Thoreau and Emerson to explore early American voices in the discourse on "nature." To investigate the emergence of conservation and forest management, readings are selected from Pinchot, Muir, and Leopold. The beginnings of urban and park planning are considered in relation to these positions on the management of nature. Next, the environmental movements from the 1960s onward are surveyed in readings from the social sciences and humanities. We then explore the major debates in environmental ethics and the broader reach for global ethics. Writings celebrating biodiversity are examined along with the emergence of conservation biology as an example of engaged environmental scholarship. Finally, new efforts to widen the interdisciplinary approaches toward environmental issues are introduced in investigating world religions and ecology as well as cosmology and ecology.

**Religion, Ecology, and Cosmology;** *Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim*

For many years science, engineering, policy, law, and economics alone were considered indispensable for understanding and resolving environmental problems. We now have abundant knowledge from these disciplines about environmental issues, but still not sufficient will to engage in long-term change for the flourishing of the Earth community. Thus, there is a growing realization that religion, spirituality, ethics, and values can make important contributions, in collaboration with science, to address complex ecological issues. We will examine those contributions, acknowledging both the problems and promise of religions. This course in religion, ecology, and cosmology involves an exploration of the world's religions within the horizon of interdependent life and the cosmos. In particular, it investigates the symbolic and lived expressions of this interconnection in diverse religious texts, ethics, and practices arising from relations of humans with the universe and the Earth community. The course also draws on the narratives of science for an understanding of the dynamic processes of the universe, Earth, life, and ecosystems. In the first part of the course, we will explore ecological perspectives from Indigenous traditions, Christianity, and Confucianism. In the second part of the course we

will survey environmental ethics leading to an emerging global ethics. In the final section, we turn to the interdisciplinary scientific story of the unfolding universe as a cosmological narrative orienting new human-Earth relations. This scientific narrative has continuity and discontinuity with earlier religious cosmologies and their views of nature.

### **The Worldview of Thomas Berry: Flourishing of the Earth Community; Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim**

Thomas Berry (1914-2009) was an historian of religions and an early and significant voice awakening religious sensibilities to the environmental crisis. He is particularly well-known for articulating a New Story of the universe that explores the world-changing implication of evolutionary sciences.

This course investigates the life and thought of Thomas Berry in relation to the field of religion and ecology as well as the Journey of the Universe project. As an overview course it draws on his books, articles, and recorded lectures to examine such ideas as: the New Story, the Great Work, and the Ecozoic era. In addition, the course explores his studies in world religions including Buddhism, Confucianism, and Indigenous Traditions. Finally the course will highlight his challenge to Christianity to articulate theologies of not only divine-human relations, but also human-Earth relations.

### **Journey of the Universe; Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim**

This course will draw on the resources created in the Journey of the Universe project. This consists of a film, a book, and a series of 20 interviews with scientists and environmentalists. Journey of the Universe weaves together the discoveries of evolutionary science together with cosmological understandings found in the religious traditions of the world. The authors explore cosmic evolution as a creative process based on connection, interdependence, and emergence. The Journey project also presents an opportunity to investigate the daunting ecological and social challenges of our times.

This course examines a range of dynamic interactions and interdependencies in the emergence of galaxies, Earth, life, and human communities. It brings the sciences and humanities into dialogue to explore the ways in which we understand evolutionary processes and the implications for humans and our ecological future.

### **Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies**

Los Angeles, California, USA | <http://ziegler.aju.edu>

### **Introduction to Halakhah**

This course invites students to write a position paper on Jewish law, and students often select topics that seek to raise consciousness on environmental issues (e.g. use of water for ritual hand washing when there is a drought, or issues of food justice and kashrut, or animal rights and kashrut).

### **Science and Religion**

A fourth-year course for those concentrating in Philosophy, looks at the intersection of science and religion through a focus on creation and the natural world. Clearly issues of ecology and environmental concerns emerge throughout the semester and we read historians and philosophers of science (Barbour, Jonas) in addition to Jewish thinkers ancient and contemporary.

## Appendix 1 – Pontifical Universities in Rome Offering Courses on Faith and Ecology

### Pontifical Athenaeum of Saint Anselm Rome, Italy

**Bioethics, Environmental Issues and Human Ecology;** *July 2015, summer session, Course Director: Fr. Gonzalo Miranda, LC, Academic Coordinator: Prof. Massimo Losito*

Although bioethics since the 1970s has addressed issues tending toward the biomedical, it had in its origins, in the thinking of some of the pioneers, a strong interest in environmental issues. The deepening ecological crisis necessitates, again and decisively, that this modern science examines this question. The course is therefore intended to deal with an interdisciplinary methodology on such issues of great public interest as pollution, resource management, the energy issue, climate change, biodiversity, environmental biotechnology, and animals. It is evident, however, that if these issues are the responsibility of bioethics, solutions cannot and should not be completely of a technical nature. To go to the roots of the environmental crisis and then to find the guidelines for effective solutions, we must broaden our vision to include ethics, anthropology, theology: what is the place and role of man in the environment; how to discern the ethical nature of human behavior towards animals; and ultimately, where is the foundation of respect we owe to the non-human world. The course will show finally the Christian vision of the environment, which provides valuable guidance to the balance between conservation and development within the pastoral care of creation in respect of that original mandate to Man to "till and maintain." Where in fact human ecology is respected, the environment is the prime beneficiary.

**Etica dell'ambiente – Ethics of the Environment;** *Prof. Massimo Losito*

Since ancient times, human beings, with their activities, have changed the world's environment. But in recent centuries, beginning with the industrial revolution, thanks to an amazing but problematic technological progress, the impact of these advances has become increasingly widespread. Over the last fifty years, man has been asked to reflect on ethical human action. This has serious questions about the future of man and his home; earth: does there exist for man a right way to behave towards a natural habitat? Which position and role does the human being have in the environment? Because, in the final analysis, it should be compared to nature. The answers to these questions are often very different, reflecting opposing views. The course aims to analyze the so-called "environmental issue", especially in its (bio) ethical implications. After identifying man's place in nature, will the definition and critical analysis of the major ethical issues address the relationship between man and environment? Then we will describe the proposal and the Christian vision of the environment and environmental movements. The second part of the course will discuss issues such as GMOS, ecological question about energy, climate change, etc.

### Pontifical Gregorian University Rome, Italy

**Ecologia Umana – Human Ecology;** *Paolo Conversi, 2014-2015 Lecturer in Faculty of Social Sciences*

Objective: to deepen interdisciplinary human ecology - that calls into question the responsibility of the human being to themselves, others, the created and the Creator - through the study of interactions between natural environment, population, technology and social organization. Contents: 1) Distinction between ecology and human ecology. 2) Social Doctrine of the Church and human ecology: ethical principles. 3) Evolution of the concept of development and its connection with human ecology. 4) The natural environment, land resources, energy and natural, climate and water resources. 5) The human population, the process of urbanization, the great migrations. 6) Technology and economy, communication technologies and biotechnology. 7) Social organization and the environment. 8) Environmental Education in its different aspects.

### Salesian Pontifical University Rome, Italy

**Ecology: Science, Philosophy, and Faith in Dialogue in the Context of the Contemporary Ecological Crisis;** *Prof. Joshtrom Isaac Kureethadam, Faculty of Philosophy. MS course for graduate students is offered every two years.*

The Course attempts to offer a comprehensive understanding of the contemporary ecological crisis from a scientific, philosophical and theological perspective. The first part of the course makes evident the uniqueness of Earth as our common planetary "home" which has been molded over billions of years of cosmic evolution and is currently imperiled by human activities. The second part describes the contemporary ecological crisis as a physical problem (climate change and its impacts, biodiversity loss, pollution, waste and depletion of natural resources, etc.), a moral problem (its disproportionate impacts on the poor), and as a theological problem (irresponsible stewardship of creation from the part of humanity). The third part traces the philosophical root causes of the ecological crisis, in the anthropocentric, mechanistic, dualistic Weltbild of Modernity. The fourth part offers a survey of attempts to respond to the ecological crisis at the local and planetary levels, cutting across grass root movements and non-governmental organizations, state and governmental agencies, international organizations, Christian churches, and major world religions.

## Author Biographical Information

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### **Rabbi Yonatan Neril, Co-Author**

Yonatan founded and directs the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development. A native of California, Yonatan completed an M.A. and B.A. from Stanford University with a focus on global environmental issues, and received rabbinical ordination in Israel. He has spoken internationally on religion and the environment, and organized multiple interfaith environmental conferences in Jerusalem in which religious leaders of several faiths spoke. He was a Dorot and Presentense Fellow and the lead author and general editor of two publications on Jewish environmental ethics, including [Uplifting People and Planet: 18 Essential Jewish Teachings on the Environment](#). He lives with his wife, Shana, and two children in Jerusalem.

### **Joy Auciello, Co-Author**

Joy studied the intersection between communities and sustainability for her BA at Marlboro College in New Hampshire, where she earned her degrees in environmental studies and anthropology. Her work centers on the idea that people living in communities are intrinsically more sustainable. In her thesis work, she completed the STARS for her alma mater report, an in-depth study of sustainability for institutions of higher education. She is currently working on her MBA in management for sustainable business.

### **Lucy Atkinson, Research Assistant**

Lucy completed a BA in International Relations and Modern History at the University of East Anglia, UK and a Master's degree in Global and Local Community Development at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, during which time she interned at the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development. Lucy is now pursuing a PhD at York University, UK, focusing on conflict sensitive education and English language instruction.

## About the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development

***The Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development (ICSD)***, based in Jerusalem, accesses the collective wisdom of the world's religions to promote co-existence, peace, and sustainability through education and action. ICSD promotes and manifests an inter-religious vision for environmental sustainability by encouraging the cooperation and training of religious leaders, teachers, and communities on ecological issues. ICSD is pleased to have successfully implemented a range of projects in partnership with numerous organizations, foundations, private donors, and clients. **More information can be found at [www.interfaithsustain.com](http://www.interfaithsustain.com).**

### Channels of Action and Opportunities for Support in 2015

1. **Seminary Students Sustainability Project** promotes courses for seminarians on faith and the environment to advance moral leadership for sustainability. The project, which focuses on Christian seminaries in the United States, advocates to seminary administrators; publishes reports on ecology courses for seminarians; promotes resource-sharing of course syllabi on creation care; and holds virtual and live meetings of seminary deans and faculty. ICSD also offers consulting services to assist in the expansion of teaching on faith and ecology.
2. **The Women's Interfaith Ecology Project** works with Jewish, Christian, and Muslim women studying religious studies in Jerusalem to become agents of environmental change. Participants explore the intersection of faith, ecology, and leadership through a series of educational and interactive seminars.
3. **The United Planet Faith & Science Initiative** uses video teleconferencing and live meetings to engage the world's principal religion and science leaders in a united message for environmental protection. Video content from these meetings is disseminated via social media and to news outlets to promote public awareness, political will, policy, and action. See [www.upfsi.org](http://www.upfsi.org) for more information.
4. **Eco Israel Tours** ([www.ecoisraeltours.com](http://www.ecoisraeltours.com)), a branch of ICSD, engages a range of groups, including seminarians, on the link between ecology, faith teachings, and the Holy Land.

### Supporters and Organizational Status

2015 supporters include The Julia Burke Foundation (Hawaii), the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Germany), the Sinton Family Foundation (San Francisco), the Opaline Foundation (San Francisco), and private donors. ICSD is registered in Israel as a non-profit organization (amuta), and fiscally sponsored in the U.S. by the 501(c)3, Jumpstart.

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In June 2015, just after the release of Pope Francis' Encyclical, 'Laudato Si: On Care for our Common Home', the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development (ICSD) published this *Report on Faith and Ecology Courses in North American Seminaries*.

The past number of years have witnessed a significant growth in the number and diversity of courses on faith and ecology at institutions training seminarians in North America. Research undertaken for this report indicates that there are over 160 courses that have been offered at over 50 seminaries, theological schools, and divinity schools in the United States and Canada in the past number of years, out of 231 seminaries investigated. It is encouraging to see religious institutions – seminaries in particular – stepping into a leadership role in environmental stewardship through the expansion of this subject matter.

The mission of ICSD is to catalyze a transition to a sustainable human society through the active leadership of faith communities. Using these courses as a model and a resource, ICSD advocates for and promotes the expansion of ecology and stewardship as an integral component of curricula throughout seminaries of all faiths.