

## **DRAFT**

### **RSFT 4017**

## **ECO Core Intensive: Educating to “Create Just and Sustainable Communities that Counter Oppressions”**

**Gabriella Lettini**

Monday-Friday; January 23-27, 2017

Time: 9:00am-12:30pm-1:30-5:00pm

Educating to “Create Just and Sustainable Communities that Counter Oppressions” (“ECO”) is a core goal of Starr King’s M.Div. and M.A.S.C. degree programs. In this required core intensive, M.Div. and M.A.S.C. students’ work together to form a framework for counter-oppressive spiritual leadership. We will ask: how can spirituality, ministry, and religious activism respond to the multiple and intersecting realities of injustice, suffering, and oppression in our lives and our world? What models of justice and sustainable community invite our commitment? Drawing on Unitarian Universalist and multi-religious sources, we will explore how in the midst of a world marked by tragedy, sorrow and injustice there remain abiding resources of beauty and grace that nourish resistance, offer healing and call us to accountability and community building. Reading and writing assignments to be completed before the course. This course will include Moodle as a resource to share material, resources and ideas before and after the residential week in Berkeley.

The 2016 ECO Core Intensive will have a special focus on poverty and racial injustice.

RSFT 4017

3 Units

Minimum 6 Limit 20

Faculty Consent Required: Yes

Fireside Room

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Through this course students will:

- Form a foundational understanding of Starr King’s commitments to Educate to Counter Oppressions and Build Just and Sustainable Communities  
<https://www.sksm.edu/academics/introducing-our-emergent-educational-design/eco/>
- Understand poverty scholarship.
- Employ interdisciplinary intersectional approaches and integrate theory and praxis, theology and ethics, spirituality, scholarship and community engagement.
- Create a community of learners and seekers who are able to work in collaboration with one another, with experts in the field and on the ground (including Poverty

Scholars), and who can bring their course learning to a larger public in their own communities.

- Articulate how the issues explored in the course relate to their vocational journey and ministries.
- Build their capacity to design a personalized educational plan, in consultation with their advisor, so as to deepen their knowledge, skills, and strategies for religious leadership and/or ministry that counters oppressions and creates just and sustainable communities.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the conclusion of this course students will:

- Have gained a deeper understanding of the causes and the impact of poverty, and be able to discuss and analyze the ways poverty manifests intersecting oppressions and injustices related to: race, class, gender, gender expression, environmental racism, immigration, ageism and ableism.
- Have learned and practiced an approach to scholarship and epistemology that privileges the knowledge, experience, and agency of those most directly affected by specific injustices and who are engaged in resisting/countering those injustices.
- Have deepened their capacity to respond to intersecting oppressions grounded in spiritual values, sacred texts, and religious practices.
- Have developed a plan for how they will deepen their anti-oppressive work during their studies at SKSM.

### **PROCEDURE**

This course will be heavily based on class discussion in a variety of formats. It will also involve short lectures by the instructor, class exercises, student presentations, visits by guest speakers, movie screenings, and field visits, striving to respect a multiplicity of learning styles and perspectives. It will also include brief opening rituals at the beginning and closing of each day.

### **LEARNING STYLES AND SPECIAL NEEDS**

Within the intensive format, a diversity of learning styles and perspectives will be engaged. Students with special needs or learning disabilities that need to be accommodated to maximize their learning should identify those needs to the instructors. Communication in advance of the first day of the intensive will be helpful to assure adequate planning and preparation for special needs.

## **GRADING/EVALUATION**

In keeping with Starr King's educational philosophy, this course is offered on a credit/no-credit basis (grade recorded on the GTU system as P/F). The instructors will provide a narrative evaluation of your work which will assess holistically your performance in the different areas and requirements outlined below. Elements for the assessment of students will include class attendance, class participation, evidence of critical engagements with required readings, writings, Moodle postings and the performance of the class as a whole. **As counter-oppressive religious leadership is best if done not in solitude but as a collective endeavor, we will place high value on collaborative learning** by making it one of the evaluative criteria for the class. This will include the way we challenge ourselves to learn together as a group.

If you need or desire to receive letter grades please notify the instructors. For people requesting letter grades, we follow PSR guidelines (<http://www.psr.edu/grades>).

**Class Attendance** - Attendance and participation in class discussions are essential components of this course, and all students are required to attend class and participate actively. Please **be on time. Please refrain from texting, e-mailing or surfing the Internet for personal reasons during class.** If you are waiting for an important call (e.g. as a chaplain, on a family emergency), please notify the instructors and sit next to the exit door.

**Class Participation** - It is absolutely essential to individual and group learning that you approach the beginning of this course having completed the required readings and prepared to engage in group discussions.

Credits and workload: **this is a 3 credits graduate class.**

## **PREREQUISITE READING ASSIGNMENTS:**

### **Required Books:**

Please read and critically engage **the four texts** below **before the beginning of the course.** Please note that in class we will focus more closely on *Pedagogy of the Poor* and *Trauma Stewardship*.

Willie Baptist and Jan Rehman. *Pedagogy of the Poor: Building the Movement to End Poverty*. New York: Teacher's College Press, 2011. 978-0807752289 \$30.95

Angela Y. Davis. *Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket, 2016. ISBN 978-1-60846-564-4 \$15.95

Greg Jobin-Leeds and AgitArt. *When We Fight We Win! Twenty-First Century Social Movements and the Activists that Are Transforming Our World*. New York, NY: The New Press, 2016. ISBN 978-1-62097-093-5 \$17.95

Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky and Connie Burk. *Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers; 2009. 978-1576759448 \$19.95

Strongly suggested: Tiny a.k.a. Lisa Gray Garcia. *Criminal of Poverty: Growing Up Homeless in America*. San Francisco: City Lights; 2006. 10:1-931404-07-0 \$ 15.95

## ARTICLES:

Please read and critically engage **the articles** below **before the beginning of the course**. All of these articles are available on Moodle in pdf format. Please **go to Moodle and enroll in RSFT 4017 – ECO Core Intensive. The password is: ECO16**. If you are an entering student and do not have a Moodle account yet, please contact the instructor ASAP. You will receive the articles via email.

- Bounds, Elisabeth M. "Gaps and Flashpoints. Untangling Race and Class," in *Disrupting White Supremacy from Within*, edited by Jennifer Harvey, Karin Case, and Robin Gorsline. Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 2004, 123-141.
- Di Angelo, Robin, "White Fragility" *The International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 2011, 54-60.
- Dwight N. Hopkins, "More Than Ever: The Preferential Option for the Poor," in *Opting for the Margins: Postmodernity and Liberation in Christian Theology*," pp. 127-142.
- Field, David N. "On (Re)Centering the Margins: A Euro-African Perspective on the Option for the Poor," in *Opting for the Margins: Postmodernity and Liberation in Christian Theology*," George Rieger, ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, 45-69.
- Gutierrez, Gustavo. "The Situation and Tasks of Liberation Theology Today," in *Opting for the Margins* pp. 89-104.
- Harvey, Jennifer. "Race and Reparations: The Material Logics of White Supremacy," in *Disrupting White Supremacy from Within*, edited by Jennifer Harvey, Karin Case, and Robin Gorsline. Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 2004, 91-122.
- Lester, Rita, "The Nature of Nature: Ecofeminism and Environmental Racism in America," in *Gender, Ethnicity and Theology: Views from the Other Side*, Rosemary Radford Ruether, ed. Fortress Press, 2002, pp. 230-246.
- McIntosh, Peggy, "White Privilege: The Invisible Knapsack"
- Rieger, Jorge. *Remember the Poor: The Challenge to Theology in the Twenty-First Century*. Harrisburg: PA: Trinity, 1998, pp. 127-163.
- Schneider, Laurel C. "What Race is your Sex?" in *Disrupting White Supremacy from Within*, edited by Jennifer Harvey, Karin Case, and Robin Gorsline. Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 2004, 142-162.
- Smith, Andrea, "Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy: Rethinking Women of Color Organizing" in *Color of Violence: The INCITE! Anthology*, South End Press, 2006.
- Smith, Andrea, "U.S. Empire and the War against Native Sovereignty", in *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. Cambridge: South End Press, 2005.
- Kwok, Pui Lan, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005, pp.125-167; 209-230.
- "Understanding Gender" <https://www.genderspectrum.org/quick-links/understanding-gender/>

**PREREQUISITE WRITING ASSIGNMENT:**

**To be completed before the course and due on January 9, 2017**

**Autobiographical introduction** - Please write a 4-5 page essay reflecting on the way spirituality and justice work have connected and/or disconnected in your own life. What are traditions/influences/sources/experiences/people that have most shaped your spirituality and your connection with justice work at different moments in your life and that brought you at SKSM?

**Format:** Essays should double-spaced, font Times New Roman 12, with **1.25 inch margins for my** written comments. Please remember to insert your name, title and number of the course, title of the assignments, date and page numbers. Please insert your last name in the name of the file. Footnotes should be in Turabian.

Please remember that this is a “public” document read by faculty and students: share only what you feel comfortable sharing at this time.

- **Due on January 9.** Please email it to [glettini@sksm.edu](mailto:glettini@sksm.edu), subject line: ECO Core intensive autobiographical introduction.
- Please also share this paper on Moodle, in the designated Forum.
- Please come to our first class on August 15 prepared to introduce yourself verbally for 2-3 minutes on the basis of the content of this paper.
- Please read all autobiographical introductions by January 22 (before the beginning of the course).

**Leading one of our ritual moments:** our work will be grounded in rituals and spiritual practices at the beginning and at the end of each day. Please go on Moodle and sign up on the Google doc sign-up sheet. Collaboration is highly suggested.

**FINAL PAPER:**

Please write a **7-9 page integrative reflection** on your major learnings in this course. Please make sure to address the following questions:

- What authors impacted you the most and why? Please engage with at least three of the authors read.
- How do you plan to engage intersectionally poverty, economic and racial justice in your studies and in your present and future ministry? How will you work with your advisor and mentors to implement some of your ideas?

- How do you plan to maintain a sustainable life-style during your studies and in your present and future ministry? How will you work with your advisor and mentors on this goal?

**NOTE:** Essays should be double-spaced, font Times New Roman 12, with 1.25 inch margins for my written comments. Please remember to insert **your name, title and number of the course, title of the assignments, date and page numbers. Please insert your last name in the name of the file. Footnotes should be in Turabian.**

**Paper delivery:** Please e-mail the papers to the instructor by the due date ([glettini@sksm.edu](mailto:glettini@sksm.edu)), Subject Line: ECO Core Intensive Writing Assignment. Please send the papers **by the deadline:** All papers will be returned with the final narrative evaluations.

**Due: February 10, 2017**

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### **SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

If you have completed the recommended readings and still have time to dedicate to this course, these readings will offer useful additional material:

- Pimpare, Stephen. *A People's History of Poverty in America*. New York: New Press, 2008.
- Farajaje-Jones, Elias. "Breaking Silence: Toward an In-the Life Theology" In *Black Theology: A Documentary History. Volume two: 1980-1992*. James H. Cone and Gayraud S. Wilmore eds. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1993, 139-159.
- Macy, Joanna. "The Ecological Self: Modern Ground for Right Action" In *Readings in Ecology and Feminist Theology*. Mary Heather MacKinnon and Moni McIntyre eds. Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1995, Ch. 21, 258-269.
- Harrison, Beverly. "The Power of Anger in the Work of Love" In *Making the Connections: Essays in Feminist Social Ethics*. Boston, Beacon Press, 1985.
- Leonard-Wright, Betsey. *Class Matters: Cross-Class Alliance Building for Middle Class Activists*. Gabriola Island: BC: New Society Publishers, 2005.
- Smith, Chip. *The Cost of Privilege: Taking On the System of White Supremacy and Racism*. Fayetteville, NC: Camino, 2007.
- Soelle, Dorothee, *The Silent Cry: Mysticism and Resistance*. Fortress Press, ISBN: 0-8006-3266-4, \$25.
- Regina M. Schwartz. *The Curse of Cain: The Violent Legacy of Monotheism*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997. 978-0226742007
- Tracy West, *Disrupting Christian Ethics: When Racism and Women's Lives Matter*. 2004 Westminster John Know Press, 0-664-22959-X, \$30.

## SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

*Frozen River* by Courtney Hunt, USA, (2009). Class, gender, race, colonialism  
*The Edukators*, by Hans Weingartner, Germany (2005). Class  
*Matewan, West Virginia*, by John Sayles, USA, (1987). Class and race  
*The Pawnbroker*, by Sidney Lumet, USA (1964). Race, class, faith traditions  
*La Promesse (The Promise)*, by Jeanne-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, Belgium (1996). Race, class, immigration  
*Rosetta*, by Jeanne-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, Belgium/France (1999). Poverty, homelessness.  
*Together (Tillsammans)* by Lukas Moodysson, Sweden (2000). Gender, class, sexual orientations, radical politics  
*Free Land: A Hip Hop Journey from the Streets of Oakland to the Wild Wild West* by Ariel Luckey  
*Living Broke in Boom Times: Lesson from the Movement to End Poverty*, by Peter Kinoy and Pamela Yates, USA, 2007. 73 min. *We will watch it in class.*  
*Antonia's Line*, by Marleen Gorris, Netherlands, 1996, 102 min. Gender, sexual orientation, re-imagining power  
*Soldiers of Conscience*, by Gary Weimberg and Catherine Ryan, USA, 2008, 65 min. War  
*Sleep Dealer* by Alex Rivera, USA/Mexico, 2008. 90 min. Immigration, poverty, colonialism  
*Bamako*, by Abderrahmane Sissako, Mali/France/U.S., 2006, 108 min. Colonialism, poverty, truth commission  
*Bitter Bread/Pane Amaro: The Italian American Journey* by Gianfranco Norelli, USA, 2009, 103 min. Immigration, poverty, class  
 2009.  
*Sankofa*, by Haile Gerima, 1993. Germany, Ghana, USA, UK. 125 min. Slavery, racism

## COURSE CALENDAR

### Intensive Week

Note: The following outline is a draft, subject to revision and fine-tuning as we proceed through the week, respond to emergent issues and pursue our learning goals.

### ECO CORE INTENSIVE JANUARY 2016 SCHEDULE (subject to change)

#### Fireside Room

#### Monday: Building an ECO Learning Community

##### AM

- 9:00 Opening Spiritual Practice
- Ice-breakers
- Introduction to the class

**10:30ish body break (15 minutes)**

- Participants Introduce Themselves, based on their 3-5 page autobiographical paper

PM

- **12:30-1:30 Lunch Break – Self Care**
- 1:30 SKSM ECO Statement
- Discussion of ECO statement
- **3:00 body break (15 minutes)**
- Introduction to the Integrative Reflection Assignment
- *Trauma Stewardship*: journaling and small groups
- Closing Spiritual Practice, Adjourn at 5:00 p.m.

**Tuesday: Engaging Poverty Scholarship**

AM

- 9:00 Opening Spiritual Practice
- Introduction to the day
- Integrative Circle – Council Process
- **10:00ish body break (15 minutes)**
- Film Viewing and Discussion: *Living Broke in Boom Times*
- Poverty Scholarship
- **12:30-1:30 Lunch Break – Self Care**

PM

- 1:30-3:00 Meeting with Poverty Initiative (via Skype)
- **3:00 Body break (15 minutes)**
- The practice of Poverty Truth Commissions
- Integrative Circle – Council Process
- Introduction to Faithful Fools Visit
- Closing Spiritual Practice; Adjourn at 5:00 p.m.

**Wednesday: Visiting Community Sites and “Listening With Our Hearts”**

- 9:30-12:45 Site visit to the Faithful Fools in SF (see handout with directions)
- **12:30-3:00 Lunch – Back to Berkeley – Self-Care**
- 3:00 Spiritual Practice
- Reflection in Response to Site Visit – Small groups, large group
- Integrative Circle – Council Process
- 4:30 Closing Spiritual Practice, Adjourn 5:00 p.m.

### **Thursday: Making the Connections**

AM

- 9:00 Opening Spiritual Practice – Integrative Circle  
Intersectional Fish Bowl
- **11:00ish body break 15 minutes**
- Discussion on readings: small groups, large group
- **12:30-1:30 Lunch Break – Self Care**

PM

- 1:30 Integrative Circle – Council Process
- 2-4:30 Theatre of the Oppressed
- 4:30 Closing Spiritual Practice, Adjourn 5:00 p.m.

### **Friday: The Challenge of Poverty for Critical and Constructive Theology**

AM

- Opening Spiritual Practice, 9:00 a.m.
- 10:00 Sustainable Leadership  
Integrative Circle – Council Process
- **12:30-1:30 Lunch and Self-Care**

PM

- 1:30 *Trauma Stewardship*: Our intentions
- 2:30 Student Presentations: Each student in the class will present a 3-5 minute integrative reflection in response to our work together this week.
- **3:00 Body break 15 minutes**
- Closing Integrative Reflections
- **4:15 Closing Ritual**

### **Integrative Period**

In the three weeks following the conclusion of the intensive, class participants will have opportunities to continue interacting and reflecting. The Moodle site will remain open for you to post follow-up comments to our class work and further responses to the posted articles. Posting on Moodle is optional yet encouraged.

You are invited to post your final integrative reflections on Moodle. I will leave the course open until the end of March so you may have a chance to read the final papers of your classmates. Posting your final is optional.