

Starr King School for the Ministry
Shake My Future: Readings in Climate Justice
3 Credits, Fall, 2017

Instructor: Rev. Sofia Betancourt
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I am generally in the office Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10-4. Please email to set a meeting time in order to avoid conflicts with other meetings and my teaching schedule.

DRAFT Syllabus

Course Description:

Shake My Future: Readings in Climate Justice is a hybrid seminar course intended for advanced masters students. Doctoral students should look for the course on climate justice and religious ethics taught by Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda (PLTS) this term. Students will be expected to engage in critical close readings of seven texts, assist with leading portions of class discussions, and complete a final research paper. This course focuses on recent writings in relation to climate change and climate justice, and works to situate an interdisciplinary approach to the subject within a broader exploration of religion, ethics, and society. Authors include: Pope Francis, Stacy Alaimo, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Vandana Shiva, Amitav Ghosh, Geraldine Terry, and Willis Jenkins. *Contact instructor for permission to enroll.*

Required Texts:

Alaimo, Stacy, *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).
List price: \$24.95, also available as an ebook for \$12.99

Pope Francis, *Encyclical on Climate Change and Inequality / On Care for Our Common Home* (Brooklyn: Melville House, 2015).
Text can be downloaded as a free .pdf file here: <https://laudatosi.com/watch>

Ghosh, Amitav, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016).
List price: \$22, also available as an ebook for \$10.49

Jenkins, Willis, *The Future of Ethics: Sustainability, Social Justice, and Religious Creativity* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2013).
List price: \$34.95, also available as an ebook for \$19.99

Kimmerer, Robin Wall, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* (Canada: Milkweed Editions, 2013).
List price: \$18.00, also available as an ebook for \$11.47

Shiva, Vandana, *Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in an Age of Climate Crisis* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2008).
List price: \$14.95, also available as an ebook for \$9.99

Terry, Geraldine, ed., *Climate Change and Gender Justice* (Warwickshire: OxFam GB, 2009).

List Price: \$35.95

Book can be downloaded from Oxfam as a free .pdf file: <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/climate-change-and-gender-justice-115359>

Learning Objectives:

Students are expected to:

- Gain a working vocabulary for the theoethical study of current topics in climate justice;
- Acquire a basic understanding of current theological and religious ethics approaches to the “unprecedented problem” of climate change;
- Diversify their engagement with the dominant canon of environmental ethics and theology by studying scholars, religious traditions, and counter-oppressive perspectives that are often relegated to the margins of the field; and
- Develop a working understanding of the role of religion and ministerial leadership in working for climate justice.

Requirements:

Students are required to:

- Complete all course readings and be prepared to participate in thoughtful, compassionate, and constructive discussion;
- Facilitate on class discussion based on the text for the week;
- Submit ten out of eleven weekly reflections in a timely manner; and
- Write a 12-15 page final paper articulating their personal theological positions in conversation with course materials.
- *Please contact the instructor regarding accessibility, including any special needs or considerations.*

Grading:

Grading for this course will be based on:

- Timely submission of weekly reflections; – 30%

- Facilitation of one class discussion based on the text for the week – 15%
- Thoughtful class participation; and – 20%
- Final paper. – 35%

Final Paper: Deadline TBA.

- Paper can be on the topic of your choosing so long as it relates to the topics covered in class.
- Please email instructor by (DATE TBA) with a general thesis and approach. 1 page max.
- Final paper should be 12-15 pages, drawing on course materials and outside research in conversation with a climate justice concern of particular interest to you.
- Make sure you have a clearly stated, and arguable, thesis for your research paper.

Class Schedule:

*The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule and assigned readings to achieve course objectives.

Week One: Class Introduction

Week Two: The Future of Ethics I

- Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics*, Chapters 1-3

Week Three: The Future of Ethics II

- Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics: Sustainability, Social Justice, and Religious Creativity*, Chapters 4-7

Week Four: On Care for Our Common Home

- Pope Francis, *Laudato Si / On Care for Our Common Home*

Week Five: Bodily Natures

- Stacy Alaimo, *Bodily Natures: Science Environment, and the Material Self*

Week Six: The Great Derangement I

- Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*, Part I

Week Seven: The Great Derangement II

- Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*, Parts II and III

Week Eight: Soil Not Oil

- Shiva, *Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in an Age of Climate Crisis*

Week Nine: Climate Change and Gender Justice I

- Terry, ed., *Climate Change and Gender Justice*, Chapters 1-7

Week Ten: Climate Change and Gender Justice II

- Terry, ed., *Climate Change and Gender Justice*, Chapters 8-14

Week Eleven: Braiding Sweetgrass I

- Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*, Planting Sweetgrass through Picking Sweetgrass

Week Twelve: Braiding Sweetgrass II

- Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*, Braiding Sweetgrass through Epilogue