

(22-857) RESISTING BIOCIDES: ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS FOR DISCIPLESHIP

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Course Description

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 redemptive love for the world.

Course Objectives

1. To deepen awareness of the interconnected causes and consequences of the environmental crises we face today.
2. To understand how environmental issues intersect with matters of race, class, and gender.
3. To gain familiarity with key figures, perennial questions, and prominent approaches in environmental ethics.
4. To increase proficiency communicating and engaging theo-ethically for the sake of empowering Christian individuals and communities to struggle for a more just and sustaining world.

Required Texts

David R. Keller, *Environmental Ethics: The Big Questions* (Blackwell, 2010, ISBN-13: 9781405176385, \$54.30 at barnesandnoble.com)

Sallie McFague, *Super, Natural Christians: How We Should Love Nature* (Augsburg Fortress, 1997, ISBN-13: 9780800630768, \$23.71 at barnesandnoble.com)

Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care, 2nd Edition* (Baker Academic, 2010, ISBN-13: 9780801036958, \$17.62 at barnesandnoble.com)

Carolyn Finney, *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors* (University of North Carolina Press, 2014, ISBN-13: 978-1469614489, \$21.66 at barnesandnoble.com)

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants* (Milkweed Editions, 2015, ISBN-13:9781571313560, \$13.94 at barnesandnoble.com)

Willis Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics: Sustainability, Social Justice, and Religious Creativity* (Georgetown University Press, 2013, ISBN-13:9781626160170, \$34.95 at barnesandnoble.com)

Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda, *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation* (Fortress Press, 2013, ISBN-13:9781451462678, \$22.00 at barnesandnoble.com)

Course Requirements

- 1) Read all assigned literature and participate actively in class discussions.
- 2) Contribute to shared outline of David Keller's *Environmental Ethics* textbook.
- 3) Present on assigned chapters from Keller (the same weeks you contribute outlines), lifting up relevant themes and questions for Christian discipleship and congregational ministry (sign up will take place the first day of class).
- 4) Submit 7 two-page response papers to the McFague, Bouma-Prediger, Finney, Kimmerer, and Moe-Lobeda readings, which include text summary, critical response, and 3 questions for class discussion.
- 5) Final Paper (15-18 pages).
 - a) Draw directly on course readings and class discussions.
 - b) Provide a theo-ethical assessment of a contemporary environmental crisis as it intersects with matters of race, class, or gender.
 - c) Articulate a creative proposal, rooted in a theo-ethical vision, for how Christian individuals and communities might engage in transformative responses.

Note: Weekly response and final papers should be submitted in Microsoft Word format, double-spaced, Times Roman font, 12pt type, 1 inch margins.

Final Grading

1. Class Participation – 25 %
2. Outlines and Presentations – 15%
3. Weekly Response Papers – 20%
4. Final Paper – 40%

Grading Criteria for Class Participation

1. You attend every class period and are on time.
2. You demonstrate familiarity with the assigned readings for the day.
3. You listen carefully to the instructor and to your classmates.
4. You are an active participant in the class discussions.

Grading Criteria for Outlines and Presentations

1. You accurately outline the key content and basic argument of the text.
2. You present compelling connections and questions for class conversation between the Keller text and theological understandings of the practice of Christian life.

Grading Criteria for Weekly Response Papers

1. You accurately summarize the key content and basic argument of the text.
2. You critically engage the basic argument of the text.
3. You raise three substantive questions for class discussion.

Grading Criteria for Final Paper

1. You accomplish what the assignment asks of you.
2. Your paper offers a clear thesis statement, follows a logical organization, is well developed, and is free of grammatical and spelling errors.
3. You enter into intelligent, critical conversation with the course texts and lectures.
4. You demonstrate a depth of theological and pastoral insight in your ethical analysis and proposals.

Grading Scale

97-100	A+	77-79	C+
93-96	A	73-76	C
90-92	A-	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
83-86	B	63-66	D
80-82	B-	<62	F

Course Schedule

1. February 4

Keller, 1-56
McFague, 1-90

2. February 11

Keller, 57-146
McFague, 91-178

3. February 18

Keller, 147-192
Bouma-Prediger, 1-110

4. February 25

Keller, 193-256
Bouma-Prediger, 111-183

5. March 3

Keller, 257-310
Finney, 1-66

6. March 10

Keller, 311-375
Finney, 67-138

7. March 17

Keller, 377-412
Kimmerer, 3-120

8. April 7

Kimmerer, 121-384

9. April 14

Keller, 413-447
Jenkins, 1-148

10. April 21

Keller, 447-475
Jenkins, 149-325

11. April 28

Keller, 476-508
Moe-Lobeda, 1-134

12. May 5

Keller, 508-558
Moe-Lobeda, 135-297

13. May 10

Keller, 561-574