

# **(ETH-657) REGENERATIVE ETHICS: THEORY, DESIGN, PRACTICE**

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**Office Hours:** By Email Appointment  
**Class Time:** Fridays, 9:00am-12:00pm

## **Course Description**

The environmental crises facing human communities worldwide present a host of difficult moral and practical questions for the Christian life. The overlapping problems of ecological degradation, resource depletion, climate disruption, and more – alongside related manifestations of social inequity and unrest – reveal the urgent need for systemic and regenerative changes within each sphere of our personal, social, economic, and public lives today. This course introduces students to the fundamental principles and tasks of complex systems theory, regenerative development, and a variety of ecological praxes in the context of Christian moral reflection for the sake of building up leaders equipped to envision, design, and implement ministries of socio-ecological regeneration. The course is a requirement in the Ecological Regeneration concentration but is open to students outside of the concentration and from many degree programs.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

Students who graduate from this course will be able to:

1. Describe the basic terminology, principles, and logic of systems theory in relation to the planetary crisis.
2. Identify the systemic roots of and connections between the environmental, economic, and socio-political crises facing human communities worldwide.
3. Differentiate and integrate theological and ecological understandings of regeneration.
4. Apply and/or advocate for regenerative practices, economics, and politics at the micro, meso, and macro levels.
5. Design a regenerative ministry project for future implementation.

## **Required Texts**

Gorringe, Timothy J., *The World Made Otherwise: Sustaining Humanity in a Threatened World* (Cascade Books, 2018, ISBN-13: 978-1532648670, \$35.77 at amazon.com)

Hemenway, Toby, *Gaia's Garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture* (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2009, ISBN-13: 978-1603580298, \$21.35 at amazon.com)

Klein, Naomi, *On Fire: The (Burning) Case for a Green New Deal* (Simon & Schuster, 2019, ISBN-13: 978-1982129910, \$27.00 at amazon.com)

Lerch, Daniel, ed., *The Community Resilience Reader: Essential Resources for an Era of Upheaval 2nd ed.* (Island Press, 2017, ISBN-13: 978-1610918602, \$28.00 at amazon.com)

Mang, Pamela and Ben Haggard, *Regenerative Development and Design: A Framework for Evolving Sustainability* (Wiley, 2016, ISBN-13: 978-1118972861, \$54.95 at amazon.com)

Raworth, Kate, *Donut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-Century Economist* (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2017, ISBN-13: 978-1603586740, \$18.84 at amazon.com)

## **Recommended Texts**

Finney, Carolyn, *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors*, University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

Jenkins, Willis, *The Future of Ethics: Sustainability, Social Justice, and Religious Creativity*, Georgetown University Press, 2013.

Keller, David R., *Environmental Ethics: The Big Questions*, Blackwell, 2010.

Martin-Schramm, Daniel Spencer, and Laura Stivers, *Earth Ethics: A Case Method Approach*, Orbis Books, 2015.

Moe-Lobeda, Cynthia D., *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation*, Fortress Press, 2013.

Rasmussen, Larry L., *Earth-honoring Faith: Religious Ethics in a New Key*, Oxford University Press, 2012.

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*, Milkweed Editions, 2015.

## **Course Requirements**

### **A. Class Participation (due weekly) – 25%**

*Drawing on your close reading of the assigned texts, engage your instructors and classmates in a critical and constructive discussion of the topics for the week, with a particular focus on imagining practical applications of regenerative practices at the personal/interpersonal, communal/institutional, and national/global levels.*

*You are expected to be in the classroom by the start of class time. You are allowed only one excused absence, granted if requested ahead of time and if based on legitimate reasons, for the course.*

**B. Systems Theory Terms and Application Quiz** (due by midnight September 19) – **15%**

*Based on the readings and class discussions from the first two weeks of class, complete an online quiz demonstrating your knowledge of the basic terminology, principles, and logic of systems theory and your ability to apply them in relation to multiple, overlapping planetary crises.*

**C. Biblical-Theological Regeneration Assignment** (due week of your presentation) – **20%**

- 1. Sign up for one week of class presentation (this will take place the first week of class).*
- 2. Collaborate as a class, partner with the library, and divide up research of biblical and theological meanings of regeneration.*
- 3. Present your research in class, with an emphasis upon both a) describing a particular biblical and/or theological meaning of regeneration and b) comparing, contrasting, and relating that meaning with the environmental meanings of regeneration addressed by the course (20-30 min).*
- 4. Add your research to a shared class document.*

**D. Regenerative Ministry Design Project** (Due December 16 by Noon, 12 pages, double-spaced, Times Roman, 1 inch margins) – **40%**

*Based upon the readings, research presentations, and class discussions, design a proposed regenerative ministry project. The form your design project should take is that of an exploratory blueprint toward future implementation rather than that of a fixed proposal. Your completed assignment should include the following elements:*

- 1. Integration of a biblical and/or theological meaning of regeneration as an orienting framework for your ministry project (be theological).*
- 2. Recognition of the realities of socio-ecological crisis as the context in which you are designing a ministry project (be bold).*
- 3. Application of the 9 principles of Regenerative Development and Design (be thorough).*

**Grading Rubrics**

Class Participation
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	a) Was I on time and in attendance for every class period? b) Did I demonstrate, verbally and non-verbally, that I was present to, engaged with, and respectful of my instructors and classmates? c) Did I contribute to each class discussion based upon the requirements for participation listed in the syllabus? d) Were my contributions based upon my preparations for class, including my close reading of the assigned texts?					
(No)	0	6.25	12.5	18.75	25	(Yes)

Systems Theory Quiz						
	a) Were my answers correct regarding basic terms, principles, and logics? b) Did I accurately apply them in analyzing the planetary crisis?					
(No)	0	7.5		15		(Yes)

Regeneration Assignment						
	a) Did my presentation cover the required elements? b) Was my description of meanings accurate? c) Did I effectively integrate biblical-theological and ecological meanings? d) Was my presentation accessible, engaging, and creative?					
(No)	0	5	10	15	20	(Yes)

Design Project						
	a) Did my project cover the required elements? b) Is my writing clear, well-developed, and free of grammatical, citation, and spelling errors? c) Does my project reflect intelligent and critical engagement with the course materials, including most if not all of the assigned texts? d) Is my project creative, insightful, and bold?					
(No)	0	10	20	30	40	(Yes)

## 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. September 6: Our Global Predicament**

*Lerch, 43-128*  
*Gorringe, 3-43*

### **2. September 13: Systems Theory**

*Lerch, 129-192*  
*Gorringe, 47-78*

### **3. September 20: Permaculture Design I**

*Hemenway, 3-67*  
*Gorringe, 79-114*

### **4. September 27: Permaculture Design II**

*Hemenway, Selected Chapters*  
*Gorringe, 117-154*

### **5. October 4: Regenerative Economics I**

*Raworth, 1-110*  
*Gorringe, 155-193*

### **6. October 11: Regenerative Economics II**

*Raworth, 111-206*  
*Gorringe, 194-236*

**7. October 25: Regenerative Politics I**

*Klein*  
*Gorringe, 237-273*

**8. November 1: Regenerative Politics II**

*Klein*  
*Gorringe, 274-306*

**9. November 8: Regenerative Project Design I**

*Mang and Haggard, v-60*  
*Gorringe, 309-348*

**10. November 15: Regenerative Project Design II**

*Mang and Haggard, 61-110*  
*Lerch, 9-42*

**11. November 22: Regenerative Project Design III**

*Mang and Haggard, 111-175*  
*Lerch, 193-246*

**12. December 6: Regenerative Project Design IV**

*Mang and Haggard, 177-214*  
*Lerch, 247-316*

**13. December 11: Regenerative Ministry Projects**

*Regenerative Ministry Projects*