

I. Course Description

This course will explore the intersection of feminism, ecology, race, class and theologies of liberation from an interdisciplinary approach forged between the discourses of theology and social theory. To this aim we will analyze the social and religious forces that have shaped the countless aspects of womanhood and the implicit, and occasionally explicit, connection with how similar forces shape dispositions toward and action against the Earth. The emerging works of ecofeminist theologians across the globe have brought to our attention how those speaking from a Womanist, Chicana, Latin American liberation theological, Postcolonial and Queer perspectives (or combinations therein) compile this quilt of liberationist voices. In this course, these voices are approached as “theologies of liberation” and in conversation with ecological issues. This will be done with a special focus on the dualistic power structures underlying our current environmental crisis. From a decolonial perspective we will approach the project of reconstructing theology. Students will become able to develop theological criteria that are in the broadest sense rational and moral, and that judges our theological views by asking the questions: “Does this theological construction make sense of the world we share?” “Does this view of divinity promote the flourishing of the world?” (Carol Christ and Judith Plaskow 2016), Do our theologies disrupt imperialistic models of human relations? Do they teach us to survive not at the expense of someone else’s survival?

II. Course Objectives

1. To develop a critical analysis of the religious aspects of the ecological crisis;
2. To develop an intersectional understanding of environmental justice.
3. To develop theological praxis focused to analyze, engage, reject and provide an alternative to colonial modes of relationships.
4. This course is focused on develop theological reflection that is liberationist at its core.

III. Textbooks

Required Texts

- Eaton, Heather. 2005. *Introducing Ecofeminist Theologies*. London and New York, NY: T&T Clark International.
- Gebara, Ivone. 2002. *Out of the Depths: Women’s Experience of Evil and Salvation*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Harries, Melanie. 2017. *Ecowomanism: African American Women and Earth-Honoring Faiths*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Optional Texts

- Ruether, Rosemary Radford. 2005. *Integrating Ecofeminism Globalization and World Religions*.
- Ruether, Rosemary Radford. 1996. *Women Healing Earth: Third World Women on Ecology, Feminism, and Religion*.
- Eaton, Heather, and Lois Ann Lorentzen. 2003. *Ecofeminism and Globalization: Exploring Culture, Context, and Religion*.

IV. Course Requirements and Assessment of Student Learning

Attending and participating in class sessions and discussions: 15%

The interactive seminar nature of this course makes regular attendance and contributions essential. Except for the most exceptional circumstances, excused absences from class sessions will not be granted. Any absence will negatively affect your final grade.

Credit will be given for engaged participation (quality, not quantity) in lecture, class attendance and preparation for in-class discussion. Engaged does not necessarily mean “voluminous;” you may be quite

prepared and attentive without ever speaking up. I don't track who speaks up and how often, so you can focus on asking questions that matter to you and making comments that are helpful to everyone.

During class discussions, it is not likely or even desirable that we will agree on all issues. When you challenge someone else's perspective or idea, keep in mind that your task is always to present a better, more compelling argument. Argue vigorously; disagree respectfully.

Should any issues or problems arise that trouble you during the course, please initiate a timely and candid consultation with the instructor. Be aware that last-minute appeals or concerns may not be addressed immediately.

Class Education Responsibility: 20%

Each week, one person will be responsible for helping us in the transition from the busyness of the day to the topic of the course. To do this, students must be prepared to present information on some environmental issue that they wish to educate the class about, from pesticide issues to endangered species, current legislative issues, or environmental success stories, resources, organizations, etc. In other words, each week it is your turn to teach the rest of us. Students have 10 minutes max. If you are uncertain on any aspect, please consult with me. A roster will establish which students will go first. Please upload your presentation at Populi. Students need to upload their presentation under both Assignments and Discussions "Class Education Responsibility [Sharing Resources]."

Final Research Projects: 30%

Students will choose between the three options below for their final research paper. All options will have an oral and a written component. The project presentations will take place at **Week 14 (in-class, Tuesday)**. Each presenter will have about 10 minutes to speak and 5 minutes to answer 1-2 questions from their peers.

Option 1 "Final Research Essay": Students will have the opportunity to decide the topic that they would like to develop a research paper on and present in the final week of class. During Week 9 or 10 a meeting must be scheduled with Dr. E to discuss your final paper's main research question and sub-questions. During Week 11 or 12 a working in progress bibliography and abstract must be submitted to Dr. E. Final Research Essay should not be shorter than 2500 word and longer than 3500 words. Detailed information about the Final Research Essay's formatting can be found at the end of this syllabus Addendum A. This option has a more research rigorously format and is advised for students who are planning to pursue a PhD or Doctoral program.

Due: Week 14 (Friday)

Option 2 "Grassroots Final Research Project": Individuals or groups (optional) will collectively choose a faith-based or secular non-governmental organization (Green NGOs, Gender NGOs or other). Your task will be to collect information about these organization, its objectives, projects, activities, strategic areas, etc. If the organization you choose have offices in Columbus (or the surrounding area) you might want to schedule an appointment in order to get the information that you need (not all organizations have a website or other easily accessible information—it might be a good idea to go directly to them to get hold of handouts, flyers, newsletters etc.). If you decide to also schedule interviews, then a meeting needs to be organized with Dr. Nogueira-Godsey so that you can get approval for Human Subject Research. I strongly encourage that you choose the organization according to your research and/or vocational interests. For example, if you are interested to develop more knowledge about urban garden projects, then it would be a great opportunity to research about Franklinton Farms (<https://franklintonfarms.org/>). If your interest is in interreligious initiatives, gender and sustainability then to learn about DAWN would be ideal

<http://dawnnet.org/> See detailed information about this assignment at the end of the syllabus Addendum A. Word limit: 2000 minimum and 3000 max.

Due: Week 14 (Friday).

Option 3 “Final Bibliographic Research Paper”: Students have the option to research a person (scholar or activist) who was or is relevant to environmental history, theology, religions and movements anywhere in the world. This paper must follow the same detailed instructions for Option 1 (see addendum A). Word limit: 2000 minimum and 3000 max. Let me know if you choose this option as soon as possible and I will provide more resources on how to do a bibliographic research paper. Personally, this is my favorite type of research. You can find my own article on Ivone Gebara, titled “A History of Resistance: Ivone Gebara’s Transformative Feminist Liberation Theology,” under Files at Populi, as example.

Due: Week 14 (Friday).

See detailed instruction for Final Research Project’s options at the end of this syllabus, see Addendum A.

Grading Criteria for Final Research Project Written Component, see Addendum B.

Grading Criteria for Final Research Project Oral Component, see Addendum C.

See Requirements for Auditors at page 12.

See Policy on Children in Class at pages 12-13.

Hybrid learning

Facebook (Secret Group) Group Discussion: 20%

The ability to make and discuss connections between culture, theoretical and ethics work is an important skill that will help you connect with and facilitate discussions with many different kinds of people across a variety of contexts. Part of our class session each week will be spent discussing some aspects of current issues in ecology, gender, race and society, of which church life is a part. To generate material for these discussions, the student responsible for each week’s **Class Education** will post in our course’s Facebook Group (if necessary, in class I will explain how Facebook Secret Groups work) a link directly related to the topic he/she explored **in class**, e.g. link to news articles, op-eds, opinion pieces, research, songs, YouTube clips (i.e., from TV shows, movies, etc.), art etc. I strongly encourage that you use reliable sources. **The student in charge will offer a sentence or two of explanation along with the posted link to clarify their rationale for the post and to generate conversation. Tell us how your post is related to that week’s Class Education.** Was it used during your presentation or as a source of information to prepare the presentation? Videos, songs, etc. that you post may be secular or religious in nature. Since our subject is on gender, sexuality and environmental issues, it is possible that some material may be rather explicit, such as those dealing with racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, xenophobic problems. If this is the case, please write a sentence warning about sensitive or explicit content. If you are unsure if your link is appropriate to post, you are welcome to email me first. In the email, provide a link to the material in question and a short description of how you understand its discussion-value. Then wait for my assessment before posting.

Each week, all other students will comment on that week’s post. **Please note that students will be graded in their ability to connect their posts with class-discussions and readings.** Comments must be thoughtful, coherent and make critical connections. It will not be counted as meeting this exercise requirements by posting comments such as: “awesome!” “seriously?” “this is terrible!” or simply clicking on like or laugh/sad/angry/love emoji.

How to write a good reading comment? Pick out a quote from a text, or a theme weaving through the prescribed texts, and connect it with the discussion post. Explain how it addresses or complicates the week's topic. Or reply directly to the link with your own view, making sure that you draw on at least one of the week's topics as you do. Avoid writing more than 200 words. Posts must be uploaded no later than Monday at 8pm.

Students may skip writing a comment one day, without penalty.

Outside Learning: 15%

To enhance the course, you are required to spend at least 15 minutes in a (relatively) non-human environment 2-3 times a week. Pick a place to get to know throughout the semester. Practice being still and attentive, listening and observing. Spend part of the time with your eyes closed, listening. Try not to think about lists of things to do, but learn to be still. You can spend some of your time in quiet reflection on a scripture, poem, course reading, drawing a picture. What do you learn from your "place"? How does your "place" change? How is your place reflective of the larger area; how is it connected to the larger bio-region? After your 15 minutes, write down your observations and thoughts. Your second time outdoors at your place can be more active – walking, gardening, exploring, looking for birds, but still try to make it a place where non-human nature is predominant. From time to time I will assign poems. Keep a journal of these sessions. Students will be required to submit a reflection essay at Week 12 (two pages-double space). You will be surprised by how hard it is to carry out this assignment, so you must be diligent, and that in itself is part of the point.

Due: Week 5, 7 and 12, for 3-5 minutes students will have the opportunity to share in class insights, realizations, complaints or experiences. There is no need to submit any written essay. Students will be graded on their preparedness, 3% for each time.

Reflection Essay (6%) Due: Week 12 on Tuesday any time before class starts. Students will be graded on their ability to develop self-reflexivity while engaging with the course's content. This must be uploaded at Populi under Assignments "Outside Learning (Reflection Essay)."

Volunteering at Seminary Hill Farm (Optional for Extra Credit): 3%

Students can opt to volunteer one day at the Seminary Hill Farm any day during the Fall Semester 2019 for extra credit. You will write 1-2 pages (double-space) report about your experience in being a farmer for one day and submit to Dr. E one week after you volunteered. Students will also have five minutes to share in class on their experience. I strongly recommend that you schedule this before week 8 starts. Volunteer Coordinator Jenni Kafer at jkafer@mtso.edu.

Please note: If, for any reason, you are unable to participate in this activity a replacement documentary review will be assigned. Please don't hesitate to contact me if necessary.

V. Course Schedule and Format

This schedule provides the general timing of topics, readings and assignment due dates. The online learning agenda found on Populi is always the most current and may vary from the schedule in this syllabus.

Ecofeminist Developments: History and Philosophy

Week 1: Introduction

Topics:

- The intersection of Feminism, Ecology and Religion;

- Course's Goals and Requirements;
- Brave Space.

Required Readings:

- Read the entire course syllabus.

Watch Before Class Starts: *Before the Flood* <https://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/before-the-flood-2016/>

In Class Activity:

- a. Your animal.

Useful Sites on Climate Change:

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

<https://climatedataguide.ucar.edu/climate-data>

Week 2: Ecological Movements and the Sources of Ecofeminism

Topics:

- Anti-Nuclear and Anti-Toxics Movements of the 70s;
- Rachel Carson and Lois Gibbs (Love Canal);
- Deep Ecology and Social Ecology.

Required Readings: **Read in the order suggested bellow.**

1. Eaton, Heather. 2005. *Introducing Ecofeminist Theology*, pages 11-17.
2. Merchant, Carolyn. 1996. *earthcare: Women and the Environment*, chapter 7 [PDF].
3. Mellor, Mary. 1997. *Feminism and Ecology*, chapter 2 [PDF].
4. Ress, Judith Mary (2006). *Ecofeminism in Latin America: Women from the Margin*. Maryknoll, chapter 2 [PDF.]

Week 3: Ecofeminist Philosophy

Topics:

- Ecofeminist Positions;
- The Logic of Domination;
- Conceptual Frameworks.

Required Readings:

1. Eaton, Heather. 2005. *Introducing Ecofeminist Theology*, pages 17-19.
2. Warren, Karen (2000). *Ecofeminist Philosophy: A Western Perspective on What It Is and Why It Matters*. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, chapter 2-3 [PDF].
3. Salleh, Ariel Kay. 1984. "From Feminism to Ecology," *Social Alternatives* 4(3): 8-12 [PDF].
4. Merchant, Carolyn. 1996. *earthcare: Women and the Environment*, pages 3-18 (only) [PDF].

Week 4: The Quest for Origins

Topics:

- Pre-Patriarchal Hypothesis;
- The Death of Nature (Instrumentalism and Mechanistic Worldviews);
- Dualism and Hierarchy;
- The Master Model.

Required Readings:

1. Eaton, Heather. 2005. *Introducing Ecofeminist Theology*, chapter 2.

2. Merchant, Carolyn. 1992. *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable World*, chapter 2 [PDF].
3. Plumwood, Val. 1991. "Nature, Self, and Gender: Environmental Feminism, Philosophy, and the Critique of Rationalism." *Hypatia* 6 (1): 3-17. [PDF]

Week 5: Colonization and the Colonization of Women's Body

Topics:

- Anticolonial Framework;
- Race and Environmental History;
- The Intersection of Sexuality and Race.

Required Readings:

1. Merchant, Carolyn (?). "Shades of Darkness: Race and Environmental History."
2. Gaard, Greta. "Toward a Queer Ecofeminism." In *New Perspectives on Environmental Justice: Gender, Sexuality, and Activism*, edited by Rachel Stein, pages 21-44 [ebook].
3. Gebara, Ivone. 2003. "Ecofeminism: An Ethics of Life." In *Ecofeminism and Globalization: Exploring Culture, Context, and Religion*, edited by Heather Eaton and Lois Ann Lorentzen, pages 163-176 [PDF].
4. Smith, Andrea. 1997. "Ecofeminism Through an Anticolonial Framework." In *Ecofeminism: Women, Culture, Nature*, pages 21-37 [PDF].

The Logic of Colonization and the Intersection to Religion

Week 6: Types of Colonization

Topics:

- Corporation Globalization;
- Green Imperialism;
- Religion and Othering.

Required Readings:

1. Warren, Karen J. 1997. *Taking Empirical Data Seriously: An Ecofeminist Philosophical Perspective*, pages 3-20 [PDF].
2. Ruether, Rosemary Radford. 2005. "Corporate Globalization and the Deepening of Earth's Impoverishment." In *Integrating Ecofeminism Globalization and World Religions*, pages 1-38 [PDF].
3. Kwok Pui-Lan. 2005. *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*, chapter 9 [PDF].
4. Mies, Maria and Vandana Shiva. 2014. *Ecofeminism*, chapter 19 [ebook].

Week 7: The Intersection to Religion

Topics:

- Feminist Spirituality;
- Goddess The(a)logy;
- Interreligious Dialogue;
- Indigenous Spirituality.

Required Readings:

1. Eaton, Heather. 2005. *Introducing Ecofeminist Theology*, pages 19-36 [ebook].
2. Carol Christ. 1992. "Why Women Needs the Goddess: Phenomenological, Psychological, and Political Reflections." In *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*, pages 273-287 [PDF].
3. Eller, Cynthia. *Relativizing the Patriarchy: The Sacred History of the Feminist Spirituality Movement*, pages 279-295.

3. Marcos, Sylvia. 2009. "Mesoamerican Women's Indigenous Spirituality: Decolonizing Religious Beliefs," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*. 25(2):25-45 [PDF].
4. Downie, Alison. 2014. "A Spirituality of Openness: Christian Ecofeminist Perspectives and Inter-Religious Dialogue," *Feminist Theology* 23(1):55-70 [PDF].

Further Readings (Optional):

1. Pinto, Valdina Oliveira and Rachel E. Harding. 2016. "Afro-Brazilian Religion, Resistance and Environmental Ethics: A Perspective from Candomblé," *Worldviews* 20:76-86 [PDF].
2. Powys, Kyle and Chris Cuomo. 2017. "Ethics of Caring in Environmental Ethics: Indigenous and Feminist Philosophies." In *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental Ethics*, edited by Stephen M Gardiner and Allen Thompson [PDF].

Fall Break October 15th – 18th

Week 8 (April 3rd): Ecofeminism and the Challenge to Theology.

Topics:

- Anthropocentrism and Androcentrism;
- Logic of Domination (ethnocentrism and colonialism);
- Sexism and the Domination of the Earth.

Required Readings:

1. White Jr., Lynn. 1967. "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science* 155(3767):1203-1207 [PDF].
2. Kwok Pui-Lan. 2005. *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*, read the "Introduction" chapter.
3. Bauman, Whitney. 2007. "Creatio ex Nihilo, Terra Nullius, and the Erasure of Presence." In *ecospirit*, pages 253-272 [PDF].
4. Ruether, Rosemary Radford. 2012. "Ecofeminism: The Challenge to Theology." *DEP. Deportate, Esuli, Profughe* 20(7): 22-33 [PDF].
5. Eaton, Heather. 2005. *Introducing Ecofeminist Theology*, chapters 3 [ebook].

Week 9: Ecofeminist Liberation Theologies: What is it?

Topics:

- Ecotheology and Liberation Theology
- Liberation Methodology
- Hermeneutical Circle

Required Readings:

1. Eaton, Heather. 2005. *Introducing Ecofeminist Theology*, chapters 4 and 5 [ebook].
2. Drexler-Dreis, Joseph. 2017. "The Option for the Poor as a Decolonial Option: Latin American Liberation Theology in Conversation with Teología India and Womanist Theology," *Political Theology* 18(3): 269-286 [PDF].
3. Bonner, Nicole. 2008. "Becoming (More-than-) Human: Ecofeminism, Dualisms and the Erosion of the Colonial Human Subject." *UnderCurrents Journal of Critical Environmental Studies* vol. 17: 12-16. [PDF]
3. Dietrich, Gabrielle. 1996. "The World as the Body of God." In *Women Healing Earth: Third World Women on Ecology, Feminism, and Religion*, edited by Rosemary Radford Ruether, pages 82-98 [PDF].

Further Reading (Optional)

Nogueira-Godsey, Elaine. 2013. "A History of Resistance: Ivone Gebara's Transformative Feminist Liberation Theology." *Journal for the Study of Religion* 26(2): 89-106.

Week 10: Ecofeminist Liberation Theologies.

Topics:

- Redefining Evil and Sin;
- Gender and Nature as Hermeneutical Tools;
- The Need for an Alternative Liberation Theological Anthropology.

Required Readings:

1. Gebara, Ivone. 2002. *Out of the Depths: Women's Experience of Evil and Salvation*, read Introduction and chapters 1 and 2.

Thanksgiving Break Nov. 25th – 29th

Week 11: Ecofeminist Liberation Theologies.

Topics:

- Sin, Grace and Salvation;
- Cross and Redemption;
- The Principle of Relatedness;
- The Evil that Women Do.

Required Readings:

1. Gebara, Ivone. 2002. *Out of the Depths: Women's Experience of Evil and Salvation*, chapters 3-5.

Class Discussion: Define What Salvation Is in Your Own Social and Cultural Location.

Week 12: Contributions from Womanist Theology.

Topic:

- Ecowomanist Theory and Praxis;
- Postcolonial Approach;
- Interreligious Conversation.

Required Readings:

1. Harries, Melanie. 2017. *Ecowomanism: African American Women and Earth-Honoring Faiths*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Class Activity:

Joshua Bennett: "Ultraviolet" <http://janessac.blogspot.com/2011/04/ultraviolet-by-joshua-bennett.html>

Identifying the Logic of Colonization in Hidden Contexts.

Week 13: Food Justice Movement.

Topics:

- Food Justice Movement;
- Expanding the Concept of Justice;
- Food Justice and Gender.

Required Readings:

1. Salleh, Ariel. 2008. "Climate Change and the 'Other Footprint,'" *Commoner* 13: 103-113 [PDF].
2. Ryan-Simkins, Kelsey and Elaine Nogueira-Godsey. "Tangible Actions Toward Solidarity: An Ecofeminist Analysis of Women's Participation in Food Justice." [forthcoming] [PDF].

3. Mallory, Chaone. 2013. "Locating Ecofeminism in Encounters with Food and Place." *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 26(1): 171-189 [PDF].
4. Alston, Margaret and Jenny Kent. 2008. "The Big Dry: The Link Between Rural Masculinities and Poor Health Outcomes for Farming Men," *Journal of Sociology* 44(2): 133-147 [PDF].

Further Readings (Optional):

1. White, Monica M. 2011. "Sisters of the Soil: Urban Gardening as Resistance in Detroit." *Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts* 5(1): 13-28 [PDF].

Week 14: Group/Individual Project Presentations.

VII. MTSO Standard Syllabus Statements

ADA / Disability Services

MTSO supports students of special populations in their efforts to reach their potential by encouraging self-advocacy and facilitating student accommodations, empowering students to help themselves, and providing the safe environment in which to do so. We commit to an inclusive learning environment and will support reasonable, documented requests for accommodations and learning adaptations. To request a reasonable accommodation, contact the director of student services at klofrumento@mtso.edu. For more information regarding 504/ADA Compliance, contact the ADA/504 coordinator at kdickson@mtso.edu.

Class Attendance

Regular attendance is expected in all classes. During unavoidable absences, students are responsible for missed work. An excessive number of absences may result in grade reduction or course failure, despite successful completion of all assigned work. In most cases, a student will fail a course if he or she is absent for 25% of the class sessions. As it relates to blended courses, students may fail the course if they are absent for 25% of class meetings (including online meetings). Use of Skype or similar technology is not a substitute for attendance

Course credits	1 credit	1.5 credits	2 credits	3 credits
25%	3 hours	4.4 hours	5.8 hours	8.8 hours

Electronic Devices

As an institution dedicated to the advancement of learning, MTSO is firmly committed to a philosophy of mutual respect. To that end, we have established a policy regarding the use of mobile phones, computers, tablets, and other electronic devices. Instructors have the right to impose appropriate grading penalties for excessive classroom disruptions due to these devices.

All electronic devices should be silenced during class. Unless there is an emergency requiring immediate attention, phone calls should be returned during classroom breaks in an area of the building that is not disruptive to other classes. The noise created by playing audio equipment so that others can hear it, or by using mobile phones in areas where others are attempting to study or to do research is disruptive.

Notebook and tablet computers have become commonplace in the classroom. However, the use of such devices should be restricted to course-related purposes. General browsing of the Internet or engaging in email or social network conversations during class time is inappropriate.

Human Subjects Research

Research by MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel that collects non-public information from and/or about living individuals or contemporary organizations/groups for purposes of publication or public presentation (including class assignments) must be approved by the Human Subjects Research

Committee. MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel should err on the side of caution and apply for committee approval of any activity that may fit this description.

Inclusive Language

In accordance with MTSO’s inclusive language policy, all students are expected to use gender inclusive or gender neutral language in their writing and in classroom discussions when referring to human beings. Inclusive language is carefully and deliberately chosen to break barriers of exclusivity. It is for everyone and against no one. It focuses on the message given by guarding against inaccuracy in the vocabulary of the sender. Inclusive language is an intentional attempt to communicate in a universal way.

Grading Scale

MTSO’s grading scale uses letter grades (A, B, C, D and F, with plusses and minuses as appropriate).

Outstanding work			Substandard but passing work		
A+	4.0	>=97%	D+	1.3	67%-69.9%
A	4.0	93%-96.9%	D	1.0	60%-66.9%
A-	3.7	90%-92.9%	D-	<i>not used</i>	
Good work			Failing work		
B+	3.3	87%-89.9%	F	0.0	
B	3.0	83%-86.9%			
B-	2.7	80%-82.9% (<i>lowest pass for D.Min.</i>)			
Work meets minimum standards			Other grades		
C+	2.3	77%-79.9%	P	Pass (equates to C- or higher)	
C	2.0	73%-76.9%	WP	Withdrawn Passing	
C-	1.7	70%-72.9%	WF	Withdrawn Failing	
			IP	In Progress	
			I or EX	Incomplete / Extension	
			AU	Audit	

Pass/Fail Grading Option

Within certain limits, a student may complete up to nine credit hours at MTSO on a pass/fail basis, rather than for a letter grade (A, B, C, D or F). Dual degree students may take three additional hours pass/fail. All students seeking ordination are encouraged to check with their annual conferences (or appropriate judicatory) before exercising the pass/fail option in any courses, since they may have limitations on pass/fail courses that are different from those prescribed by MTSO.

The deadline for pass/fail applications is the end of the second week of the course. For weekend courses, the deadline is prior to the second weekend. For intensive courses, the deadline is by the end of the second day of class. Requests should be made with the Application for Pass/Fail Credit or via email showing faculty advisor approval. Requests to change to pass/fail grading in a course received after the deadline for these requests will not be accepted. Once a course has been changed to pass/fail, the course may not be reverted to standard letter grading. When exercising the pass/fail option, to receive a grade of pass the student must do at least the equivalent of C- work in the course. For example, if the student opts for pass/fail grading and his or her performance in the course would have earned a D+ grade and would have earned the student credit for the course within the letter grade system the student will fail the course and will not receive credit.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of I (Incomplete) may be used under special circumstances on a temporary basis when a student needs additional time on course assignments. To receive a temporary course grade of Incomplete, students must petition the professor, their faculty advisor, and the dean. Students must complete the petition and

obtain the appropriate signatures unless they are physically unable. The completed petition must be delivered to Academic Affairs before the last day of regularly scheduled classes (before finals week) as listed on the Academic Calendar. It is strongly recommended that students deliver the petition to Academic Affairs for review at least one week prior to this deadline as lack of sufficient lead time may result in the denial of the petition. The dean may ask to confer directly with the student, faculty advisor, and/or instructor before making a decision.

The date by which all course work must be completed will be no later than four weeks after the last day of the term as listed on the Academic Calendar. For incomplete courses in which a new letter grade has not been submitted after one week has passed from the date by which all course work was to be completed, the grade will be recorded as an F.

Grade Changes and Appeals

Students who believe that they have not been graded fairly should first speak to the instructor who gave the grade. If, after this conversation, the student still believes that the grade is unfair, the student may file a written appeal with the dean, within 30 days of having received the grade, and set forth the reasons for the appeal. The dean will consult with both the student and the instructor. If the dean finds grounds to support the student's claim that the grade is unfair, the dean may modify the grade. The dean will render the decision regarding the appeal in writing.

Faculty members may change grades within 30 days after the final grade deadline for the term in which the course was taken. After the 30-day period, no grades will be changed unless there is a petition because of extenuating circumstances.

Documenting written work at MTSO

All written work submitted for courses at MTSO must conform to the Note-Bibliography style in the Chicago Manual of Style (17th edition) or, for MACM students, the American Psychological Association (6th edition). A standardized format enables the readers to have full and immediate information concerning works cited and consulted by the writer. The format must be followed consistently throughout the paper, including footnotes, endnotes, in-line notes, and bibliography. Mixing the two styles in the same paper is not permitted. Papers not conforming to a proper and consistent style may be returned to the writer for a re-write or with a grade that reflects failure to follow the required format. If you have questions, please consult with the school's writing instructor, the dean, or a faculty member.

Instructors may designate one of the two styles as mandatory for assignments in a course. Papers not conforming to a proper and consistent style may be returned to the writer for a re-write or with a grade that reflects failure to follow the required format. If you have questions, please consult with the school's writing instructor, the dean, or a faculty member.

See https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html#cg-journal

For a helpful discussion of how to avoid academic misconduct, see the Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) website at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02>.

Academic Misconduct Policy

Freedom of inquiry and expression are essential to the educational process, but this freedom must operate within a system of order. Accordingly, academic misconduct in any form will not be tolerated and may result in failure of course work or other sanctions up to and including expulsion.

The following are specific (but not all-inclusive) examples of academic misconduct:

1. Cheating on examinations of any kind by whatever means, including preparation for an examination by means of obtaining copies of examination, past or present, and copying from other students.

2. Use of oral and/or written private research of a paid or voluntary person and representing this work as one's own, whether within the classroom or in any context of the academic program.
3. Borrowing without attribution (plagiarism or misuse of sources) from published and unpublished works, including writings and media in any format taken from websites, apps, and other online sources. Plagiarism is defined for these purposes in a broad rather than a narrow sense and therefore is not limited to definitions found in Civil Law which apply to Copyright Laws, the commercial reproduction of books, articles, images, and audio and video recordings.

This policy applies not only to the production of written assignments, but also to oral, electronic, and digital work presented in any format. Students are always expected to attribute clearly and explicitly work that is the intellectual and creative property of others.

Sanctions for Academic Misconduct

When academic misconduct has been established to a faculty member's satisfaction, the faculty member may assign the student a failing grade on the assignment or in the course, and may recommend stronger sanctions to the dean.

Faculty members are required to report all incidences of academic misconduct to the dean. The instructor must submit documentation of academic misconduct to the dean and to the student. The dean's determination of whether academic misconduct occurred is not subject to appeal. If the dean determines that no violation has been committed, the dean will address with the faculty member penalties imposed in the class. The dean may impose additional sanctions to the student beyond those given by the instructor (e.g., required meetings with the writing instructor, reprimand, probation, suspension or dismissal). Sanctions will be communicated by the dean to the student and to the student's faculty advisor in writing with copies of all communications and documentation retained in the student's permanent record.

If a student is found to have committed academic misconduct a second time, the dean will typically impose the sanctions of suspension or dismissal. The dean shall initiate any suspension or dismissal for academic misconduct by giving the student written notice specifying the charge against the student and the sanctions imposed. The dean may in some circumstances meet with the student to communicate the charges and discipline prior to formal written communication.

Academic misconduct disciplinary appeals process

If a student wishes to appeal the sanctions imposed by the dean, the student shall inform the dean in writing within 14 days from the date contained in the dean's notification of sanctions.

The appeal shall be scheduled for hearing by an executive session of the Academic Affairs Committee of the School on or before the date of the Academic Affairs Committee's next regularly scheduled meeting. If a member of the Academic Affairs Committee must recuse themselves due to a conflict of interest, the Chair will ask another member of the Executive Faculty to serve in an *ad hoc* capacity, starting with members of the Faculty Personnel and Student Review Committees. The student shall have the right to present evidence of extenuating circumstances which would warrant leniency.

The Committee shall deliberate in private session and will decide by majority vote to accept, reject, or amend the discipline recommendation by the dean. The decision of the Committee shall be communicated in writing with documentation retained in the student's permanent record.

VIII. Supporting Materials

Requirements for Auditors

Auditors must partially fulfil the course requirements. These entail weekly readings (only the required listed readings), class attendance and involved participation as well as preparation for in-class discussion.

Students will receive weekly questions, the answers for which must be written or typed out and brought to the following class. Auditors will not submit any of the course's written projects for evaluation. Auditors must indicate to the course's professor if they wish to participate in the online discussions, e.g. Facebook Group and Introductions.

Policy on Children in Class

Currently MTSO does not have a formal policy on children in the classroom. The police described below is a reflection that came to me via Dr. Bridgeman. This was posted by an unidentified student who shared their professor's policy online, which I agree with and adopted for myself.

"The police described here is just a reflection of my own belief and commitments to student, staff and faculty parents:

1. All exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as necessary;
2. For older children and babies, I understand that unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to miss class to stay home with a child. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.
3. I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status;
4. In all cases when babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met;
5. Finally, I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have finally gone to sleep. While I maintain the same high expectations for all students in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem-solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance.

ADDENDUM A – Final Research Projects Instructions

Final research Project is divided in two parts: an oral and a written component. See at the end of this addendum further information on the oral component. Project presentations will take place on Tuesday Week 14. Each group or individual will have 10 minutes to speak and 5 minutes to answer questions. The written submission of the project is **due on Friday Week 14**.

Written Essay must be submitted at Populi under Assignment tab “Final Research Project – Written Component.”

Oral Presentations PowerPoint, handouts or any other resource must be uploaded at Populi under Assignment tab “Final research Project – Oral Component.”

Option 1 “Final research Essay”

Identify a topic or an issue that you are genuinely curious and/or passionate about. It can be a topic that we didn’t cover or slightly touched during this semester. Your final research paper must be based on this topic. After you decide what your research topic is, you must develop your research question. See below links that will assist you on how to develop your paper’s research question and thesis. Schedule a meeting with Dr. E during Week 9 in order to discuss your final paper’s main research question and sub-questions.

➤ Come to the meeting prepared.

Please note that although the links below will help you to be prepared, the best resource is to consult with Dr. Trad Nogueira-Godsey.

1. How to Write a Research Question <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/guides/how-to-write-a-research-question>

2. How to Write an Effective Essay <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWqMQ26Gqi4>

3. How to Write a Thesis Statement <https://wts.indiana.edu/writing-guides/how-to-write-a-thesis-statement.html>

During Week 11 a working in progress bibliography and abstract must be uploaded at Populi under Discussion tab. Student’s Final Research Essay should not be shorter than 2500 word and longer than 3500 words. Bibliography must have a minimum of 10 resources.

Final Research Papers must follow this format:

1. Paper’s font size 12p, margins are justified and the standard fonts for academic papers are Times New Roman, Arial and Helvetica, paper’s body must be double spaced. Please note that paper’s cover, abstract and bibliography are not double spaced.

2. Papers must have a cover page, which includes the research paper’s title, students’ name, instructor’s name, date and institution. Let me know if you need assistance with templates.

3. Paper’s abstract (200-250 words max.) has its own page. It is likely that your abstract will undergo some changes after you conclude your paper and this is fine. Although some scholars argue that an abstract should be written after you finish writing your paper, I have found that to write it before helps to keep you focus in your topic. There are several online links on how to write a good abstract. Here are a few

<https://leo.stcloudstate.edu/bizwrite/abstracts.html>

<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/guides/writing-an-abstract>

<https://wordvice.com/how-to-write-a-research-paper-abstract/>

Please note that abstracts and Introductions are not the same. You still have to write a proper introduction to your paper even though you have an abstract.

4. Paper's body must be well structured with a clear introduction, conclusion and bibliography. See at Populi attachments on how to structure a research essay, write an introduction and conclusion. They can be found under the Assignment tab "Final Research Project – Written Component."

5. In order to guarantee good grade and learning process, make sure that you send your project to the writing structure for final editing before submission.

- Projects that do not follow academic structure and proper editing will be returned.

PLEASE NOTE, "Option 1" has a more research rigorously format and is advised for students who are planning to pursue a PhD or Doctoral program.

Due: Week 14 (Friday).

Option 2 "Grassroots Final Research Project"

Please note, your final research paper must be double spaced. Word limit: 2000 minimum and 3000 max. Papers must have a cover page that includes the research paper's title, students' name, instructor's name, date and institution, a separate page for the abstract, paper's body must be well structured with a clear introduction, conclusion and bibliography. Paper's font size 12p, margins are justified and the standard fonts for academic papers are Times New Roman, Arial and Helvetica. Make sure that you send your project to the writing structure for final editing before submission.

- Projects that do not follow academic structure and proper editing will be returned. See more detailed information on these steps above.

Grassroots Research Project Main Research Question:

Critically examine the relationship between women's experiences of environmental injustice/degradation or climate change and the emerging of ecofeminist/ecowomanist theologies and theory. Identify a *minimum two examples* (for a passing grade) of ecofeminist/ecowomanist critical theological analysis (from the course readings) to illustrate the alternative ways that those theologians are proposing to generate fluid, holistic and life-giving relationships between the earth-divine-humans. Groups or individual will collectively choose at least one *faith-based green project* (it can be non-denominational, interreligious or interfaith) or *non-profit organization* (Green NGOs, Gender NGOs, Racial Justice NGOs or others), and analyze how (or if) theory is reflected in the day-to-day practice of those organizations that you researched.

For example, does a practice of sustainable farming indeed promote a flourishing space for those involved? Does green theologies and/or spiritual praxis contribute to the promotion of human and/or earth rights, civic consciousness and solidarity? Do those involved in those organization have any level of awareness on corporate globalization and its challenges? What are they levels of knowledge on environmental and social justice, if any? Does a view of an interrelated world and interrelatedness of the whole with the divine (sacredness of the earth) indeed promote egalitarian relationships or environmental justice?

After choosing the green group or project, the groups' task will be to collect information about these organizations, their objectives, projects, activities, strategic areas etc.

If the organization you choose have offices in Columbus (or the surrounding area) you might want to schedule an appointment in order to get the information that you need (not all organizations have a website or other easily accessible information—it might be a good idea to go directly to them to get handouts, flyers, newsletters etc.). If you decide to also schedule interviews, then a meeting needs to be organized with Dr. Nogueira-Godsey (Week 5 and 6) so that you can get approval for Human Subject Research. Informal conversation with those involved with those organizations and observation do not require approval for Human Subject Research.

Schedule a consultation (compulsory) with Dr Elaine Nogueira-Godsey to discuss your research question at week 7. If you need help to get started you can also consult with Dr Nogueira-Godsey before this time.

Individual Report for Groups:

If you decide to work in a group, together with the written project you will submit an individual report that includes:

- What was your role in the group project?
- How did you contribute in the process of this group project?
- How did you experience working in a group?
- What did you learn from this experience?

- Individual reports must not exceed one typewritten page.

Option 3 “Final Bibliographic Research Paper”:

You have the option to research a person (scholar or activist) who was or is relevant to environmental history and movements anywhere in the world. This paper must follow the detailed instructions above (Option 1). Word limit: 2000 minimum and 3000 max. Let me know if you choose this option and I will provide more resources on how to do a bibliographic research paper. Personally, this is my favorite type of research. You can find my own article on Ivone Gebara, titled “A History of Resistance: Ivone Gebara’s Transformative Feminist Liberation Theology,” under Files at Populi for example.

Instructions to be followed by all research projects:

A. Learning Contract: on Tuesday Week 10 any time before class starts all students must email me a learning contract. This must be sent as a proper written attachment and not in the body of an email. A learning contract consists of a short paragraph for each point below that details:

What you intend to learn, develop, or construct with your research project,

How you will know if you’ve achieved this,

How you will evaluate the quality of your reflection/construction, and

What grade you intend to achieve.

- This paragraph will serve as the formal learning agreement between you and me.

B. As an addendum to your final project, and referring to your learning contract (above), you will provide me with a written evaluation that discusses how you think you achieved your goals, your evaluation of the quality of your work in the project, and what grade you would assign to your work. *This is not a full guarantee that I will give you the grade you choose for yourself. As the instructor, I retain the prerogative to adjust your grade if I feel you are being either too lenient or too harsh with yourself.* But this is an opportunity for you to set clear and specific benchmarks of scholarly accountability for the work you produce.

C. The points below must be included in your Written Research and Oral Project presentation.

See Addendum B and C evaluation criteria that will be used for written and oral components.

1. A general presentation of the green group or project/NGO.
2. Their engagement with environmental and/or social issues; do they conduct projects, organize workshops, or does the organization incorporate other forms of community/environmental involvement? If yes, what are they doing? If no, why?
3. From what you have learned about the organization(s), what is the theoretical relationship between *theology/spirituality and social/environmental justice* that is being conveyed? And/or is there a relationship between *interfaith practice and social/environmental issues* within this organization(s)? Is intersectionality a concern for those organizations? If yes, in what ways? Develop an analysis that explains these relationships or lack thereof. Your analysis must clearly show how the organization’s theology, ethics or forms of spirituality influences/guides their mission and day-by-day practices.

4. Draw on course reader(s) and information gathered about the organization to illustrate some of the complexities between theology and spirituality, gender, race, class and ecology that you have identified.

ADDENDUM B – Final Research Paper Grading Criteria¹

Student Name: _____ Topic/Title: _____

**Paper-Specific Objectives:	Strong	Satisfactory	Weak
SCHOLARLY RESEARCH: You have drawn on a minimum of 5-7 scholarly sources related to your selected topic, including standard reference works, primary sources, and/or secondary materials such as scholarly books and articles. Facts used are accurate, background details are provided as necessary, and you demonstrate grasp of the material.			
RESEARCH FOCUS: You have established a sufficiently narrow research question to fully develop 2-3 diverse perspectives on that question from within the selected organization. You clearly illustrate how shared principles or values inform these different perspectives, practices or positions.			
ARGUMENT: You have articulated a clear and original thesis related to your research question, and your paper stresses analysis (critical examination which brings out the essential elements) over narrative.			
CRITICAL SYNTHESIS: Your use of sources, argument, and conclusion reveals significant original insight(s) and/or creative connection(s) among the diverse views or practices you have selected for your paper.			
General Academic Writing Standards:	Strong	Satisfactory	Weak
INTRODUCTION: Your introduction establishes a context and background, clearly defines the question or problem you will address in the paper, and offers a strong statement and/or outline of your argument.			
STRUCTURE: Your paper has a logical structure: the paragraphs flow from one idea to the next and support the overall argument. This is maintained throughout the paper.			
CONCLUSION: Your conclusion sums up the preceding arguments, draws together the paper, and adds insight to the discussion.			
GRAMMAR AND USAGE: The paper displays a command of standard written English, with few errors in grammar or usage.			
TONE AND STYLE: The tone of the paper is reasonable, well-written and flows well from one section to the next. When referring to human beings, you avoid using gender-exclusive or prejudicial language.			
USE OF SOURCES: Your paper uses a combination of direct quotation, paraphrase and summary. Direct quotations are not overused and are relevant to your discussion. They are properly introduced and formatted.			
CITATION STYLE: The sources of direct quotations and paraphrased material are correctly cited using the Chicago style of citation (author-date).			
LENGTH: Paper is the proper length, without sacrificing content or style.			

**These criteria will be given approximately double weight in evaluating the paper.

Base Grade: _____ Late Penalty (if any): _____ Final Grade: _____ Additional Comments: _____

¹ A special thank you to Professor Reid B. Locking for making his courses' syllabus available to colleagues at American Academy of Religion's Syllabus Project. This grading criteria has been adapted from his course Interreligious Dialogue and Practice at the University of Toronto.

ADDENDUM C – Final Research Project Oral Component Evaluation Criteria:

The group project is worth 30% of your course-work (15% for the written assignment and 15% for the oral presentation). On Week 14 each group or individual will each have 10 minutes to present their project. Use 10 minutes for the presentation and 5 minutes to answer questions.

Each group or individual oral presentation will be evaluated according to the following categories:

1) Evidence of planning and group or individual preparation

All members of the group are present and involved in the presentation

Clear evidence that each individual has played his/her role in the research process

2) Well Organized Presentation

The themes are presented in a coherent and clear manner, with a well-defined introduction, discussion and conclusion.

3) Mastery of the subject

Evidence of thorough knowledge of the researched organization.

Demonstrate a convincing and substantiated argument.

4) Connection with the course-material

Making clear connections of researched organization with issues raised in course-material.

5) Creativity “Extra mile”

This is an extra-point awarded for evidence of creativity, imagination and originality in presentation which goes beyond mere fulfilling of course-work requirements.