Religious Studies 103A
Contemporary Trends in Religious Thought
Instructor: Prof. Walter H. Capps
Spring Quarter 1970

COURSE INFORMATION SHEET

General Auspices of Course (from catalog):
"The courses in Religious Studies are designed to provide students with the
intellectual tools and scholarly background required for a critical understanding
of the forms and traditions of religion that have appeared in human culture."

Course Description (from catalog):
"A survey of the growth and development of twentieth century religious thought and
its historical background."

Particular Stresses of Course (Spring Quarter 1970):
The course has several purposes. It is designed, first, to acquaint the student
with the thought of some of the more influential thinkers-about-religion in the
twentieth century. Secondly, the course is arranged so that current activities
in "religious thought" can be placed in recognizable historical and religious
backgrounds. Finally, the course focuses particularly on the various starting
points which have been selected when men reflect responsibly on religion and/or
on what it is to be religious.

Topics to be Treated in Class Lectures (not necessarily in chronological order):

I. Approaching Religion Starting from Immanuel Kant: Background Factors

II. Approaching Religion Starting from Numinal Experience

III. Approaching Religion Starting from Human Anxieties
    Reading Assignment: (Paul Tillich) D. Mackenzie Brown, Ultimate Concern

IV. Approaching Religion Starting from the Accumulation of Western Culture
    Reading Assignment: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Letters & Papers From Prison

V. Approaching Religion Starting from Covenantal Promises
    Reading Assignment: Richard L. Rubenstein, After Auschwitz

VI. Approaching Religion Starting from Discrepancies between Modern and Primary
    World Outlooks
    Reading Supplement: Karl Barth, "Prefaces" to The Epistle to the Romans;
    and/or Barth, Evangelical Theology; and/or Georges Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth;
    and Rudolf Bulmann, Jesus Christ and Mythology; and/or Albert Schweitzer,
    Out of My Life and Thought.

VII. Approaching Religion Starting from the Natural World
    Reading Assignment: Teilhard de Chardin, Building the Earth

VIII. Approaching Religion Starting from Analyses of Language Usage
    Reading Assignment: John Wisdom, "Gods" in Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society
    (on reserve).

IX. Approaching Religion Starting from the History of Religions
    Reading Supplement: Erwin R. Goodenough, "Religionswissenschaft" in Numen.

X. Approaching Religion Starting from the Future

Ground Rules:
1. Paper, due April 27, maximum 6 pages (1/5 of final grade)
2. Paper, due May 18, maximum 6 pages (1/5 of final grade)
3. Final examination, Saturday, June 13, 7 to 10 AM, covering lectures and reading
   assignments (3/5 of final grade).

Note: Late papers will be discounted in value by at least one letter grade.