

The Teachers' File

A NEW FEATURE

One of the more dramatic new developments on the interface of religion and the sciences, to which *Zygon* has devoted itself for thirty years, is the rapid increase in the number of relevant courses taught in colleges, universities, and seminaries throughout the world. The emergence of this teaching field represents nothing less than the engagement of both the intellectual and religious worlds, as those worlds are embodied in academia, with the religion-and-science enterprise, in all its significance and scope.

We can speak in such lofty terms because the range and diversity of these courses is impressive. A conservative estimate reckons that at least 150 such courses will be taught during 1996 in the English-speaking world (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States), not to mention Germany, Scandinavia, and Eastern Europe. The instructors of these courses include teachers from many disciplines: the natural and physical sciences, the social sciences, history, philosophy, religious studies, and theology. The institutions which accredit the courses range from state universities (e.g., Florida State University, University of California—Santa Cruz, University of Wisconsin at Madison and Oshkosh, Oxford University) to private colleges (e.g., Carleton College, Rollins College) and church-related colleges across the spectrum—Catholic, mainline Protestant, Evangelical. Theological seminaries and graduate schools also sponsor such curriculum features.

When one considers that the range of students involved in these courses matches or exceeds the range and diversity of the institutions and the instructors, it is clear that, within the arena of this teaching and learning, a significant interaction is taking place, involving both the secular and the religious intellectual life of the societies involved.

Since these developments are part of what this journal has been working for over the past three decades, it is appropriate for us to redouble our efforts to be a resource for these courses. Toward this end, we are experimenting with this new feature in our pages. We will include items that appear to be of direct relevance to the teaching of religion-and-science. We will be relying on the advice of teachers and

students for our selection, and with this issue, we solicit suggestions and contributions from our readers, particularly from teachers and students in the field. We have already received comments that call for bibliographies and other resource listings, as well as sample course syllabi. We intend to include such items in each issue.

No one has done more to nurture this teaching endeavor than the John Templeton Foundation. Two years ago, its leaders' vision led to a Model Courses Program, which now has become the much more extensive Science and Religion Course Program (see Margaret Wertheim's article describing the program in *Zygon*, September 1995). We are grateful that the Templeton Foundation is extending its partnership with this journal with a start-up grant that undergirds this new section.

— Philip Hefner

What's Coming Next in The Teachers' File

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In this section we are beginning a new series, What Every Teacher (and Student) of Religion-and-Science Courses Should Know. The first two installments will appear in the next issue:

"Physics: What Does One Need to Know?"—John R. Albright, physics, Purdue University Calumet.

"Chemistry: What Does One Need to Know?"—Allan Utke, chemistry, University of Wisconsin—Oshkosh.

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