

COVER SHEET: Request for Approval to Use W-Designation

TYPE I. PROFESSOR COMMITMENT

- (X) Professor Joel MLECKO Phone 2310
- (X) Writing Workshop? (If not at IUP, where? when? _____)
- (X) Proposal for one W-course (see instructions below)
- (X) Agree to forward syllabi for subsequently offered W-courses?

TYPE II. DEPARTMENT COURSE

- () Department Contact Person _____ Phone _____
- () Course Number/Title _____
- () Statement concerning departmental responsibility
- () Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

TYPE III. SPECIFIC COURSE AND SPECIFIC PROFESSOR(S)

- () Professor(s) _____ Phone _____
- () Course Number/Title _____
- () Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

SIGNATURES:

Professor(s) Joel Mlecko

Department Chairperson Albert E. Boufford

College Dean [Signature] 7/12/93

Director of Liberal Studies Darlene Richardson

COMPONENTS OF A PROPOSAL FOR A WRITING-INTENSIVE COURSE:

I. "Writing Summary"--one or two pages explaining how writing is used in the course. First, explain any distinctive characteristics of the content or students which would help the Liberal Studies Committee understand your summary. Second, list and explain the types of writing activities; be especially careful to explain (1) what each writing activity is intended to accomplish as well as the (2) amount of writing, (3) frequency and number of assignments, and (4) whether there are opportunities for revision. If the activity is to be graded, indicate (5) evaluation standards and (6) percentage contribution to the student's final grade.

II. Copy of the course syllabus.

III. Two or three samples of assignment sheets, instructions, or criteria concerning writing that are given to students. Limit: 4 pages. (Single copies of longer items, if essential to the proposal, may be submitted to be passed among LSC members and returned to you.)

Please number all pages. Provide one copy to Liberal Studies Committee.

WRITING SUMMARY--RS 481 "ATHEISM"

RS 481 deals with those major individuals, systems, and organizations that advocate atheism. The course is cross-cultural and covers a time span from the ancient to the contemporary world. The course is proposed for identification as a "W" course. It was taught once before as a "481" and will be proposed, in the Fall of 1993, as a permanent part of the regular (non-481) RS curriculum; it will be offered once every two to three years. It will also be proposed as a Liberal Studies Elective course. As an upper division course, most students in the class will be juniors and seniors, drawn from a variety of majors. Some RS majors will take the course as an elective within the RS program. Class size is limited to 25.

THERE ARE SIX BASIC TYPES OF WRITING WHICH OCCUR IN THIS CLASS. . . .

1) **NOTE-TAKING.** Because there is no standard textbook for this course, much of the material is presented in lectures and discussions. Students are encouraged to take their notes in a double-entry format--that is, one side of a page for recording the lecture and the opposite for making later notations about implications, questions, and insights which the student sees. Information on good note-taking will be provided. Although notebooks are occasionally examined if a student is having difficulty, they are not collected or graded.

2) **WRITING TO SUMMARIZE A POINT OR STIMULATE THOUGHT.** After listening to a lecture or participating in a discussion, students may be asked to summarize the main point(s); this helps to reinforce the idea that, for example, one approach of RS is the philosophy of religion which is argument rather than a mere collection of unrelated facts. On other occasions, students may be asked to write down a few ideas about a question in preparation for an ensuing discussion; this helps to focus thought and improve the quality and liveliness of the discussion. These are not collected and not graded.

3) **WRITING TO ENHANCE READING.** Among a variety of reading assignments, students will read 4 major articles; each is the basis for a class discussion. In preparation for these discussions, students must prepare a short 1-2 page paper as directed by an assignment sheet. The objective of the brief papers is to encourage students to think about the major ideas and implications of the articles(20% of grade).

4) WRITING FOR FAMILIARITY WITH JOURNALS. Each student will be required to pick and summarize in 1-2 pages two articles dealing with atheism from two different professional journals. They will be required to note such things as the author's introduction, thesis, subheadings, content, conclusion. This assignment is to help students be familiar with professional journals and be cognizant of the academically critical approach they utilize (10% of grade).

5) WRITING TO INTEGRATE LEARNING AND THINK CREATIVELY ABOUT A TOPIC. Students will write two 4-5 page typed, double-spaced research papers. They may choose any of 3 formats: a letter, dialogue, essay. Papers will be monitored at four stages: thesis statement, first paragraph, initial draft, final paper. Students may revise and resubmit one or both of these papers. Revisions will be graded when accompanied by the original paper containing the professor's comments and the original grade. After grading the revision(s), the professor will average the revision grade and original grade for the final assignment grade. The final paper (and any revisions) will be graded according to criteria distributed on a check sheet (40% of grade).

6) WRITING FOR EVALUATION. There will be two written examinations to ensure base knowledge for the students and to provide opportunity for the students to apply what they have learned to novel situations. Half of each exam will entail essay questions; fully edited prose is not expected (30% of grade).

**COURSE SYLLABUS
RS 481 ATHEISM**

1) CATALOG DESCRIPTION.

A study of Atheism through an analysis of those major individuals, systems, and organizations that advocate Atheism. The course is cross-cultural and covers a time span from the ancient to the contemporary world.

2) COURSE OBJECTIVES.

- a) To enable students to objectively consider Atheism.
- b) To introduce students to the diversity of value systems and life perspectives as revealed in the stance of Atheism.
- c) To enhance students' global and historical consciousness by examining Atheism in various eras and areas of the world.
- d) To provide students an opportunity to improve their writing skills.

3) COURSE OUTLINE.

- a) Intro to academic writing & to the academic study of Atheism--1 wk.
- b) Religion: an overview--2wks.
- c) Atheism: definitions, synonyms, types--2 wks.
- d) Atheism in the "East" and in the "West"--4 wks.
- e) Atheism & Christianity--1 wk.
- f) Atheism and the contemporary world: important persons, national constitutions, organizations--2 wks.
- g) Atheism: Basic arguments for and against--1 wk.
- h) Summary and concluding remarks--1 wk.

4) EVALUATION METHODS.

--40%	2 research papers
--30%	mid and final exams
--20%	4 article reports
--10%	2 journal reports

5) REQUIRED READING.

AMERICAN ATHEIST NEWSLETTERS, 1993 issues (provided by professor).

P. Angeles, ed., CRITIQUES OF GOD, Prometheus Press, 1976.

Michael Buckley, AT THE ORIGINS OF MODERN ATHEISM, Yale University Press, 1990

FREE INQUIRY MAGAZINES, 1993 issues (provided by professor).

J. Gaskin, ed., VARIETIES OF UNBELIEF: FROM EPICURUS TO SARTRE, Prometheus Press, 1989.

Madalyn O'Hair, ATHEISTS: THE LAST MINORITY, American Atheist Press, 1990.

TIME MAGAZINE, What Does Science Tell Us About God?, pp. 38-44, 28 December 1992.

RESEARCH PAPER WORKSHEET #1

NAME _____

YOUR ACADEMIC YEAR _____

YOUR MAJOR _____

NOTE: Please respond in one complete sentence for each item, unless stated otherwise.

- 1) State the topic/thesis which you will investigate.

- 2) Why did you choose that topic?

- 3) What do you think you will discover in this research?

- 4) Talk with someone about your topic for at least 10-15 minutes. In several sentences, summarize that conversation.

- 5) List, with complete bibliographic information, three books--available to you--which will be helpful for this research.

RESEARCH PAPER WORKSHEET #4

NAME _____

YOUR ACADEMIC YEAR _____

YOUR MAJOR _____

CONTENT

- ____ 1. The paper has a sufficiently narrowed idea as its thesis that effectively summarizes the material the paper covers.
- ____ 2. The information supplied was current, reliable and pertinent to the thesis.
- ____ 3. Appropriate and supportive sub-theses are used.
- ____ 4. Counter-arguments and opposite viewpoints are considered.
- ____ 5. The paper is well conceived and executed.

ORDER.

6. The paper has a clear structure with
- ____ 6. an introduction
 - ____ 7. that highlights the topic
 - ____ 8. suggests a method of approach
 - ____ 9. limits the topic (spells out what you will not do)
 - ____ 10. a recognizable and coherent sequence in the development of the argument
 - ____ 11. a conclusion that is not a surprise:
 - ____ 12. it accurately summarizes what was done
 - ____ 13. it is thoughtful, cogent, draws out the import of the paper

RESEARCH.

- ____ 14. The paper uses the appropriate kind (books, articles, journals, interviews) and number of sources for the topic.

___15. The sources cited reflect a sufficient range of opinion--both pro and con--in relation to the stated thesis.

ORIGINALITY.

___16. The paper is honest. It may draw on the ideas of others but the combination and treatment of the ideas suggest originality.

___17. The paper shows insight for understanding the topic at the broadest level.

___18. The paper shows insight in responding to a specific question.

APPEARANCE AND STYLE.

___19. The paper is neat in appearance; typing is carefully done with a good, dark print, with standard margins.

___20. The paper has been carefully proofread.

The paper uses language that is

___21. is correct (punctuation, grammar, spelling)

___22. is efficient, not wordy

___23. is suited to the topic

___24. The paper is paragraphed appropriately.

___25. The paper consistently conforms to a recommended format for references and citations and bibliography.

TIMELINESS.

The student met the due dates for

___26. thesis statement

___27. first paragraph

___28. initial draft

___29. final paper

___30. revised paper