Request for Curriculum Council Action

JAN 13 2000

TO: Mona Gardner, Associate Dean

DATE SUBMITTED: January 12, 2000

(Please submit 15 copies of your proposal)

FROM: (Name) Carole Myscofski (Department) Religion

1. Proposed Action (Please check all that apply):

Title	Number	Units
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

6. When will this course first be offered? Fall 2000

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Religion 310 CULTS IN AMERICA

A critical investigation of so-called "cults," New Religious Movements, sects, and alternative spirituality formed over the past 150 years in the United States. Includes study of a wide range of phenomena, from millenarian groups to the New Age, and their purpose and place in contemporary society. Fulfills general education credit in Contemporary Social Institutions category and U. S. diversity flag. Offered in alternate years.

RATIONALE

1. This new course is an expansion of our curriculum at the 300-level, where we have deleted (and not replaced) several redundant courses over the past 2 years. This course has been offered, in several different forms, as a 'Special Topics' course in the department four times since its creation—first taught by Carole Myscofski as "New Religions," now in May Term as "The End of the World." The topic is within Carole's research expertise and is a perennial favorite among students. This will offer a more regular opportunity to investigate New Religious Movements using scholarly perspectives.

2. Carole Myscofski will teach it, adding it to her regular roster of courses; there is thus sufficient staffing.

3. No course will be deleted, but the special topics courses related to this topic will not be

GENERAL EDUCATION CREDIT REQUEST: Contemporary Social Institutions

Course submitted for approval: **RELIGION 310: CULTS IN AMERICA**

Criteria met:

1. Courses examine the evolution of one or more contemporary

commitments of their members, drawing them away from mainstream society, religions, and family contacts. It has been further argued that religious life in America has also been transformed into a sort of "religious marketplace," in which believers—like amateur chefs—select separate, appealing, but not necessarily coherent parts of religions and stir them together into a new stew of

Request for 'Encountering U.S. Diversity' flag

Course: RELIGION 310: CULTS IN AMERICA

to consider the consequences of advantage and disadvantage in their own lives.

Through our readings about the histories of New Religious Movements and particularly in our explorations, through readings, videos, and NRM Websites, of members' roles and lives, students will be encouraged to consider the implications of membership in these alluring but controversial