
PURPOSE AND PROCEDURE

RS-I is one of fourteen core courses in the curriculum of the School of Religious and Cultural Studies of the Ecumenical Institute. This is a five unit course in which the problem and possibility of living as a full human being will be examined. Such questions as: What is life all about? How can I understand myself in this world? How can I genuinely and humanly participate in the activities of life? How can I be and act so that history itself is affected? will be the underlying queries determining the development. The ultimate aim will be understanding the meaning of the Christian Gospel for our lives in the twentieth century. This course is introductory to the full Theological Curriculum and is also prerequisite to the eight courses of the Culture Curriculum.

The course will involve independent study, seminars and lectures in four units a lecture will be given for the whole group upon the subject to be dealt with in that unit. Each member of the seminar will read the assigned article for the particular seminar and will fill in a chart form. The intention in the seminar will be to come to grips with the articles read by engaging in the kind of open discussion which enables each one to do his own thinking in the area under consideration

The supplementary readings listed under each unit are not a part of the assignments but are provided for those who will have some extra time for reading upon returning home. All of the readings, one theological and one from contemporary literature, are pertinent to the seminar subjects. It is recommended that the works be read in the order in which they are listed.

There are also included in the supplementary readings for each unit those books which deal generally with the topic to be discussed in the seminar: one is theological: one is philosophical and one is a literary work.

It is expected that everyone who registers for the course will participate without absences, read the assigned work, prepare the chart form and involve themselves completely in every area of that course.

first session

EXISTENCE IN DEPTH

God

Orientation - The Program of the School of Religious Studies

LECTURE I - THE LIMITS OF LIFE OR THE FINALITY OF GOD

Seminar One - What am I finally up against in life?

Assignment for the seminar:

Bultmann, Rudolf: The Crisis of Faith (RS)

Supplementary Reading:

Articles from RS

Niebuhr, H.H.: The Nature and Existence of God (RS)

Orgel, Irene: Jonah

Books:

Tillich, Paul: The Courage to Be, New Haven: Yale University Press (Paperbound Y-11, 1959)

Wilson, Colin: The Outsider, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1959

Camus, Albert: The Plague, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948

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second session

EXISTENCE IN AUTHENTICITY

Christ-Event

LECTURE II - THE POSSIBILITIES FOR LIFE OR THE CHRIST-EVENT

Seminar Two - Is there any word of possibility for life?

Assignment for the seminar:

Tillich, Paul: You Are Accepted (RS)

Supplementary reading:

Articles from RS

Knox, John: The Event and the Story (RS)

Sartre, Jean-Paul: The Wall

Books:

Bultmann, Rudolf: Jesus Christ and Mythology, New York: Scribner Paperbound (SH 74)

May, Rollo: Existence, New York: Basic Books, 1958

Serling, Rod: Requiem for a Heavyweight, New York Bantam Book (J 2373), 1962

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third session

EXISTENCE IN FREEDOM

Holy Spirit

LECTURE III - THE AMBIGUITY OF LIFE OR DECISIVENESS THROUGH CHRIST

Seminar Three - How can I make decisions about what to do?

Assignment for the seminar:

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich: Freedom (RS)

Supplementary reading:

Barth, Karl: The Gift of Freedom

Camus, Albert: The Guest

Books:

Barth, Karl: The Humanity of God, Richmond:
John Knox Press, 1962

DeBeauvoir, Simone: The Ethics of Ambiguity, New York
Philosophical Library, 1948

Hansberry, Lorraine: A Raisin in the Sun, New York:
Random House, 1948

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fourth session

REQUIEM FOR A HEAVYWEIGHT

Motion Picture Play

The movie will be shown and then followed by a seminar where conversations will be held as to how one is addressed in the categories of the Christian understanding by a life situation drama.

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fifth session

EXISTENCE IN COMMUNITY

Church

LECTURE IV - THE REVOLUTIONARY CADRE OR THE CREATION OF HISTORY

Seminar Five - How can I contribute significantly to history:

Assignment for the seminar:

Niebuhr, H.R.: The Church as Social Pioneer (RS)

Supplementary reading:

Articles from RS

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich: Christ, the Church and the World

Sartre, Jean-Paul: The Philosophy of Revolution

Books:

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich: The Communion of the Saints, New York:
Harper and Row, 1963

Sykes, Gerald: The Hidden Remnant, New York: Harper & Row, 1963

Anouilh, Jean: Becket, New York: Signet Book (P 2453)

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