USC from Cambridge

IAP course capers

Editor's note: USC from Cambridge is an infrequent contributor to The Tech.

I was just glancing at the 1979 IAP Final Guide the other day, and I noticed that although the course selection was certainly broad, a few of the subjects I had hoped would be covered were not. Anyway, here are some sure-fire courses I'd like to see:

12/25

The Art of Gift Giving

6. Class x3-1226

Ever had to buy a gift for the man who has everything? Tired of long lines at the mall, the store, the drugstore, the supermarket? Learn how to handle problems like these in this quick survey of toys, togs, and trinkets for literally every man in the world. You'll also learn how to supplement your annual income by ringling your chums on crowded streets. Bring your own bell and reindeer. This activity meets at the North Pole.

$45,000,000

Innsbruck Building

C. Kent

People to contact with questions:

L. Lane or J. Olsen at The Daily Planet

From a mild-mannered waiter to a victorious supreme in the time it takes to make a phone call. Applicants should have no fear of flying.

$15,000,000 (in debt)

Principles of Urban Fiscal Mis-Management

D. Fucus

Guest Lecturer: John Lindsay

The dynamics and methods behind the total financial collapse of a modern metropolis. Examples will be drawn from real life situations. The class will include guest speakers where students will have the opportunity to experiment with what they've learned, courtesy of the Cambridge City Council. Participants are warned not to try the methods they learn on a personal scale since they may be held legally responsible.

950+

Create Your Own Religion

Prof. D. Eelie

We will deal with the logistics of organizing a religion. Includes a discussion of fundraising schemes, fabrication of dogmas, and how to have your house declared a church for tax-exemption purposes. The class is best for Jews and perhaps even among the followers of Our Tech. To the proselytizers. I offer the following letter (prepared by Plymouth Lodge, B'nai Brit).

“We know that you, like many evangelical Christians, are probably motivated by the best of intentions. You hear a religious message that is so meaningful to you that you feel called upon to share it with others. We respect your desire to share. We admire your sincerity and your diligence. BUT, we cannot accept the teachings of Judaism. We are Jews and, like you, are hearers of religious truth. Our religion offers a complete and satisfying faith to anyone who earnestly strives to live in accordance with its teachings.

You may therefore wonder why we do not evangelize, as you do. First of all, we are always willing to welcome into the Jewish fold individuals who wholeheartedly attach themselves to God, to Torah, and to brad. Though we are happy to share our traditions and teachings with others, we do not actively seek converts, as you do. Our rabbis and leaders concentrate instead on bringing the truth of our religion to our fellow Jews. While we maintain that the Jewish religion is best for Jews, we do not believe that any religion has a golden truth. As our sages taught: The righteous of all nations have a share in the world to come.

Evangelical Christians at times try to convince Jews of the claims of Christianity by referring to the Old Testament, which Christians believe has been fulfilled in the New Testament. Thus you may attempt to speak to us in terms of our own Bible. We must tell you that we have no “Old Testament.” You call it Old because you have an additional one that is “New.” But we have, simply, our Bible, the Jewish Bible. The Christian New Testament, is not authoritative scripture for us. We believe, moreover, that when you interpret our Bible in the light of the New Testament, then you are imposing meanings on our Scripture that just are not there.

We do not believe in a doctrine of original sin.

We do not believe that personal salvation and eternal life should be overriding concerns in one’s life.

We do not believe that God is best understood as a Trinity, a concept which we find both arbitrary and incompatible with our affirmation of God’s oneness.

We do not recognize Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah.

The Messianic Age, in our view, will be marked not only by fulfillment for individuals, but also by redemption for all oppressed peoples, and by the establishment of an era of peace for all humanity.

The Messianic Age will come to pass in this world! Whatever else may be, in our view, the Mesianic Age will at least be a historically happening.

You affirm a covenantal relationship to God; and we can acknowledge that your covenant may be valid and binding for you as ours in for us.

Can you not reciprocate? Can you not acknowledge and respect our covenant and the vitality of our covenant?”

I would be happy to discuss these matters with any and all seekers.

Rabbi Daniel R. Shekter

Jewish Chaplain

MIT Rabbi replies to ad

To the editor:

“Excerpts” misleads

I am writing in regard to your obviously slanted “Excerpts” column published Friday October 27. The obvious point of your column was the arousal of dissent against the Christian cause. (Or the Stanford Daily depending on your point of view). I find this deplorable journalism on your part. A true Christian is one who respects the life and desires of all men, whether or not he follows them or not. No true Christian could ever force his ideals on another person. Christians grow from that after the Spanish Inquisition, and all of today’s Christians look back upon that era as the dark ages of the church. However, we do not want anyone to force their ideas upon us. This country was built on the principle of “freedom of religion.” In conclusion, the campaigns of a few activists mentioned in “Excerpts,” by their very nature as destructive campaigns are not born out of true Christianity. As Christ himself said, “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

Michael Farrell ’79

A few ideas, I guess. Have a wonderful IAP, go to as many activities as you can, and don’t forget the courses that could be a hit.