

**REGULAR STUDENTS**  
**ARE 401: CONTEMPORARY RELIGIOUS THOUGHT**  
**UNIVERSITY EXAMINATION 2012/2013**  
**4<sup>th</sup> YEAR 1<sup>ST</sup> SEMESTER EXAMINATION FOR THE DEGREE OF**  
**BACHELOR OF EDUCATION ARTS WITH IT.**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. This paper contains FIVE (5) questions
2. Answer question 1 (Compulsory) and **ANY** other 2 Questions
3. Write all answers in the booklet provided

1. Utilizing relevant examples, discuss the meaning of the following terms within the context of Religious Studies: (30 marks)
  - i) Materialism.
  - ii) Conservatism.
  - iii) Secularism.
  - iv) Agnosticism.
  - v) Humanistic Religion.
2. With specific references to the Kenyan society, relate the challenges that the Scientific Revolution poses to the basic affirmations of the Christian faith. (20 marks)
3. a) What are the factors that contributed to the rise of ‘Liberation Theology’ (10 marks)  
b) Evaluate the impact of Liberation Theology. (10 marks)
4. The German Theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), a forerunner of Religious Liberalism, asserted that religion is the “feeling of absolute dependence”. Discuss this statement by giving concrete examples from your respective faith. (20 marks).
5. With reference to your cultural or traditional belief, relate the factors that contributed to the emergence of Feminist Theology and its continued relevance. (20 marks)

**ARE 401: COURSE OUTLINE**  
**SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**ARE 401: CONTEMPORARY RELIGIOUS THOUGHT**

Year 4, Semester 1, 2013.

Contact Hours: 45

Lecture Hours: 45

Credit Hours: 3

Pre-requisite: ARE 401. Consultation Hours: Wednesdays: 8am-11am.

Lecturer's contact: 0716816023

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this course is to study the diverse radical and critical religious thought from the mid-twentieth century to the contemporary times.

**OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the study, the learner should be able to:

1. Make a survey of religious thought from the mid-twentieth century to the contemporary times.
2. Classify and understand the central roles and functions played by Contemporary Religious Thought with specific references to secularization, religion and science.
3. Discuss the effects and importance of trends or philosophies such as existentialism, humanism, neo-Marxism and liberation theologies to religions, religious movements, world economies and peoples Ways of Life.
4. State the inalienable practical roles of contemporary religious disciplines such as ecumenism, evangelical revivalism, models of inter-religious relationships in diverse human societies.
5. Have the necessary skills of examining the various scholarly tools used in the reconstruction of the Contemporary Religious Thought.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADE DISTRIBUTION**

1. Informed class participation. Classroom discussions are an integral part of learning discourse. This class will be built around intense class presentations and discussions. To do this successfully students will be required to read the assigned text prior to every class. All assignments will be given in class.
2. Students will be required to write term paper of a maximum of ten (10) pages and a minimum of eight (8) on topics to be assigned during the course. This will constitute 15% of the 30% C.A.T. marks.
3. Each student will be required to sit for a C.A.T. This will constitute 15 % of the 30% C.A.T. marks.

**CLASS POLICIES**

1. Regular attendance of lectures is mandatory and important because the course involves sharing of insights based on the readings understanding, explanation and interpretation of texts with the rest of the class. Also note that attendance of lectures (must be 80% in a semester) is a factor in grading evaluation and sitting for final examination.
2. All assignments must be turned in when they are due.

3. Both class discussions and written assignments will be conducted in academically appropriate language that enhances learning and also preserves and promotes respect for others.

## **COURSE CONTENTS: Topics and Sub-Topic**

### **I. General Introduction: Context of contemporary religious thinking**

- 1) A World Come of Age?
- 2) The Scientific Revolution/ the Inter-relationship between Science and Religion
  - i) Challenge of Science to Religion
  - ii) The Contribution of Science to Religion
  - iii) Relationship between Science and Theology
  - iv) Assessment on Science and Faith

### **II. Reactions to Scientific Revolution**

- 1) The Impact of Scientific Revolution on Protestant Theological Thinking
- 2) Historical Critical Thinking / Existentialism
- 3) Neo-orthodoxy
- 4) Humanism
- 5) Neo-Marxism

### **III. Liberation Theologies**

- 1) Black Theology--American Black Theology, South African
- 2) Latin American Theology
- 3) African Christian Theology
- 4) Feminist Theology

### **IV. Roman Catholic Theology**

#### **V. Revivalist Theology**

- 1) Pentecostalism
- 2) Charismatic Theology

### **VI. Islamic Religious Thought**

### **VII. The Future of Religion**

- 1) Pluralism
- 2) Ecumenism
- 3) Secularism

## **REFERENCES**

Cox, Harvey. *The Secular City*. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Edwards, David L. *Religion and Change*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1969.

Fern, Deane William. *Contemporary American Theologies*. New York, Seabury Press, 1981.

Henderson, Ian. *Rudolf Bultmann*, Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966.

Macquarrie, John. *An Existentialist Theology*. London: SCM Press, 1960.

\_\_\_\_\_ *Twentieth Century Religious Theology*. London: SCM Press, 1981.

Martey, Emmanuel. *African Theology- Inculturation and Liberation*. New York: Orbis Books, 1993.

McLellan, David. *Marxism and Religion*. London: Macmillan Press, 1987.

Moltmann, Jurgen. *Theology of Hope*. London: SCM Press, 1967.

Newbigin, Leslie. *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. Grand Rapids, 1989.

Nthamburi, Z. *The African Church at the Crossroads*. Nairobi: Uzima, 1991.

Polkinghorne, John. *One World: the Interaction of Science and Theology*. London: SPCK, 1986.

### **References for Further Reading**

African Ecclesial Review by AMECEA pastoral Institute (Gaba).

Callahan, Daniel ed. *The Secular City Debate*. London: Macmillan, 1966.

Dillenberger, John and Claude Welch. *Protestant Christianity: interpreted through its development*. New York: Charles Cribner's sons, 1954.

Getui. Mary and Obeng E. eds. *Theology of Reconstruction*. Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 1999.

**Instructor: Dr. Naila Napoo**