

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Iowa State University

COURSE PROPOSAL

Please complete this form with the understanding that you may revise the course description and topics before the catalog is finalized. To see a catalog from last semester, go to the OLLI at ISU Web site: www.isualum.org/olliatisu

If you are completing this form using Microsoft Word, note that it is done in tables form. To see (or to hide) the gridlines, click the Table menu and click Show Gridlines (or Hide Gridlines).

1. Values, Belief Systems, Knowledge, and Worldviews in Science & in Religion - W10-12

1. Course titles: _____

2. General field of interest (e.g., Science, Music): Science and Culture/Philosophy/history

3. Curriculum Committee contact person: Frank Rizzo

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Instructor Dr. V. V. Raman

Address: _____ City: Ames, IA Zip: _____

Phone: 585.490.0066 E-mail: vvrsp@rit.edu

Brief background of instructor (all or part of this will be used in the catalog):

Dr. V. V. Raman is Emeritus Professor at R.I.T. He is a philosopher-physicist who has authored fourteen books and many articles on a variety of subjects. He is an elected Senior Metanexus Fellow (Philadelphia), Academic Fellow of the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science, an elected member of the International Society for Science and Religion (Cambridge, UK), and a Raja Rao Awardee of the Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi).

5. **Course description** that can be used to advertise the course in the catalog (you may revise this later if you wish).

This course will begin with the thesis that both science and religion function well-defined, though these are not always explicitly articulated. These frameworks have three important components: Values, Belief systems, and Knowledge. They shape the Worldviews of Science and of Religion. This course will explore the commonalties and differences between Science and Religion in these matters, and discuss how they lead to different worldviews. The thrust of the course will be show that though the resulting worldviews may often be different, both have ingredients which are healthy for human culture and civilization, because their intrinsic interest and usefulness is context-dependent. Controversies and conflicts arise when the contextual relevance is ignored, and practitioners (of Science and of Religion) take on a totalizing approach.

6. **Specific topics** to be covered in the number of classes proposed: (See next page)

7. Preferred

class size: ___ 15 or less X 16-25 X 26-35 ___ 36-45 ___ 46-55 ___ 55 or more

I can handle any class-size up to 35, and will tailor the lecture/discussion format according to the size.

8. Preferred session

(include year) : _____ Sept.-Nov. Prefer Jan.-Feb. _____ March-May

9. Preferred number of

weeks and sessions: X 4 weeks **OR** X 6 weeks ___ 8 weeks
X Once a week ___ Twice a week

10. Check preferred class time. Put N/A where you are not available.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Comments
9:00-10:30		N/A			No preference, except that on Tuesday mornings I'd like to be in Prof. Rizzo's session.
11:00-12:30		N/A			
1:00-2:30					
3:00-4:30					

11. Recommended textbook (if any): Truth & Tension in Science & Religion

Where to obtain: Amazon.com
 Cost of textbook: \$24.00
 Students will pay: ___ Instructor ___ OLLI at ISU when registering

12. Copying:

If a large quantity of printed materials is proposed, materials may be offered as a packet to be handed out at the beginning of the semester. Cost of printing, if substantial, may be added to cost of course.

Estimated number of pages to be copied for each session: Two

13. Requested equipment

Please check choices. (A more detailed form will be provided for your use before classes begin.)

___ DVD player YES LCD projector ___ 35mm slide projector
 ___ VHS player ___ Elmo (opaque) projector X Lapel microphone
 ___ CD player ___ Overhead transparency projector ___ Laser pointer

14. Please list any potential guest presenters and city in which they live:

15. Is travel reimbursement requested? ___ Yes NO No

Session 1: Values and ethical systems

This session will define values and ethical systems. It will trace the roots of religious ethics, and how they have evolved historically: The Ten Commandments, and Dharma, in particular. It will discuss the positive and negative aspects of some ethical perspectives, and the notion of global ethics. It will also provide the ethical framework under which science functions.

Session 2: Belief Systems

In this session we will state the fundamental belief systems in religions and in science, and also the criteria by which beliefs are accepted or rejected in the two frameworks. The notions of doctrines, dogmas, proofs, experiments, and authority will also be explored, as well as the perspectives of theism, non-theism, atheism, and agnosticism.

Session 3: Knowledge

Here we will talk about the sources of knowledge and the kinds of knowledge that are obtained/obtainable from science and religion. The notions of *Gnosticism* and *Scientism*, *para* and *apara* types of knowledge will be examined. The idea of knowledge about the future: prophesy, predictability, determinism, complexity, etc. will be explored.

Session 4: Worldviews

Given the frameworks discussed previously, we will see how these shape the worldviews of science and religion. The idea of a purely matter-energy purposeless world governed by blind laws will be compared and contrasted with a world intentionally created by a Supreme Principle where human consciousness is central. The roles that these worldviews have played in human culture and civilization will be also considered.