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Dean David Sprecher
College of Letters & Science
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Dean Sprecher:

I wish to nominate Religious Studies Professor Walter Capps as one of the faculty commencement speakers.

Dr. Capps has served unquestionably as one of the most popular and talented professors at UCSB for the past nineteen years. In addition, he was recently appointed as Chair of the California Humanities Council, and President of the National Federation of States' Humanities Council. These responsible positions have required him to frequently travel nationwide, speaking on contemporary subjects dealing with the humanities, religion and politics.

Dr. Capps is also one of three Americans asked to speak before the United States Congress on the humanities, and will do so next week in Washington, D.C.. Solely through his efforts, Professor Capps has brought key political and religious leaders from all sides of the spectrum to guest lecture in his classes at UCSB. By doing so, he has literally "brought the world into the classroom," giving students a much broader prospective and understanding of the subject matter at hand.

In his own lectures, Professor Capps consistently offers profound insights on social and political issues confronting Americans today - issues which we as graduates must be prepared to face. Yet, Dr. Capps alerts his students to these contemporary problems with optimism and a sense of humor.

His oratorical skills, keen perception, and uncompromising dedication to students make Dr. Capps an ideal candidate to represent the UCSB faculty during commencement.

I would be honored to have Professor Capps speak at my graduation, and I guarantee that countless of other seniors would share my enthusiasm for this man.

Sincerely,

Rebecca E. Dodson

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Former news editor, UCSB Daily Nexus
March 1984 Graduate

Humanities Organization Appoints UCSB Professor Capps To Key Post

By KIM HANSEL
Nexus Reporter

In addition to teaching religious studies courses at UCSB, Professor Walter Capps serves as chair of the California Humanities Council, and was recently appointed president of the National Federation of States' Humanities Councils.

UCSB Philosophy Professor Herb Fingarette noted the importance of Capps' appointment to the humanities council.

"Walter Capps is the first person elected president of the National Federation of Humanities Councils who was not previously on the board," Fingarette said. "This is a most unusual honor, and a very remarkable position. He will be representing all of the humanities councils to Congress. He will be going to congressional meetings and speaking personally to congressmen."

The California Council of Humanities one of the largest humanities councils in the country. The California council has an enormous program involving funding for many projects all over the state, according to Fingarette. "This is accomplished by the production of films, radio programs, public-lecture series and performances and discussions on major topics of public interest," he added.

In the last two months Capps has traveled to Kansas, Arizona, Hawaii, Utah and Washington, D.C. to give speeches on subjects dealing with humanities, politics and religion. "The response and the turn out to my lectures have been very positive," he said.

Capps has become the principal liaison between the Federation of Humanities Councils and the United States Congress. "This is quite a job because a lot depends on Capps' persuasiveness, and his skills as a negotiator," Fingarette said. "He is going to be trying to persuade congressmembers to support the humanities councils all over the country."

Capps said he became involved in speech making because he has "always been interested in connecting linkages between the academic world and other areas in

which people live their lives." JAN 6 1984

"I think that there's a sharp division in the religious community and a political division in the community that isn't good over a long period of time," Capps said. In his lecture he points out this division between the religious and the political. "I'm nervous about this split, because it could prove to be detrimental to our country."

Capps gets topics for his lectures by thinking about how religion functions in our society. "I had a conversation with

Jimmy Carter about this last February. While Jimmy was in office, the major problems he had to deal with dealt with religion. There is so much religion in the contemporary world," Capps explained.

Capps hopes one of the results of his lectures is that Americans feel better about being Americans.

"I want to achieve two goals from giving these lectures, the first is to try to define and explain what's happening in American society, particularly in its religious dimensions. The second is to emphasize the healing message. With the end of the Vietnam War the time has come upon us to heal

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Capps...

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our wounds and bind up the divisions in the country."

Capps intends to give speeches "as long as there's an interest. What I find really exciting about these things that have happened to me recently is that I'm basically a teacher and a researcher, and giving these speeches shows the intellectual interest."

"Speaking as chairman we are very pleased with the many recognitions that Capps has received," Religious Studies Chair Richard Comstock said. "We feel that this reflects on his own accomplishment and also on the department that he's making a very fine contribution to religious studies in America."

Capps, a 1965 Yale graduate who has been teaching at UCSB for 19 years, is offering a class this quarter incorporating religion and politics. Capps hopes various prominent religious and political figures will guest lecture for the course, as they have previously.

"One of the things I've always wanted to do with the classroom is to bring the world into the classroom and the classroom into the world," he said.