



# Printon, Kane & Co.

Suite 550, 1033 "O" Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508  
NE (402) 475-7100/Outside NE (800) 522-5995

May 20, 1987

Ms. Joan Rabin  
Chancellor's Council  
UCSB  
Santa Barbara, California 93106

Dear Joan:

I heard that Walter Capps has been nominated for the National Professor of the Year Award given by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Assuming that this information is correct and that comments from those who know Walter are of some benefit, I venture to write an analysis of his skills as a teacher.

I came to know Professor Capps while I was Governor of Nebraska. He is a native of Omaha and on a trip home we were introduced to each other by a mutual friend. That I expected the meeting to come to nothing is another example of my almost infinite capacity to underestimate the magic of unanticipated moments of discovery.

In that moment when we met, I discovered a remarkable human being and I declare this at the outset of my evaluation of Walter. It should be clear that I am prejudiced in his favor and would probably support him for practically any of this world's aware. I like and respect Walter Capps as a man, husband, father, and teacher. I am thankful and grateful for our meeting.

The meeting itself, I believe, is a good illustration of why he is a good teacher. He remains almost child like in his curiosity and shows by example that exploration into the unknown can be fun. The work and sacrifice that are requirements of intellectual disciplines become apparent only after students like myself say: "I think I'm going to enjoy this".

It seems to me that fear of the unknown and the ability of the mind to seed our souls with rationalizations telling us to do something easier contribute most to our unwillingness to make the effort needed if we are to learn. There is something about Professor Capps that is so non-threatening that we manage to cross the danger point before we know it.



# Printon, Kane & Co.

Box 350, 1033 "D" Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68505  
NE 402-475-7100 Outside NE (800) 522-0295

May 20, 1987

When I was a boy, I was afraid of graveyards at night. Try as I might I could never walk through one in the dark without hearing every beat of my adolescent heart. In Walter's care we do not avoid these mental graveyards. Though our pulse may quicken a bit, we find that we are where we see worlds we did not know existed.

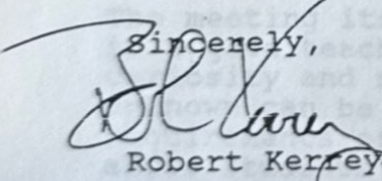
As a boy I also once visited a county fair in Seward, Nebraska. My memory tells me that I was thirteen years old. A friend convinced me to join him in sneaking to the back of the tent where we were told a girlie show was taking place. We knew we were in forbidden territory as we crawled on our stomachs and squirmed under the tight canvas floor of that tent. We were frightened not only about possibly being discovered, but also because of what we might see.

As we looked up onto the stage where a full grown and completely naked woman danced to the song "Kansas City", our world in one terrifying moment got twice as big. It seems to me that Walter's rare gift is that he enables young people to overcome their fear and to lift up a tent or two.

I suppose that the list of those recommended for the National Professor of the Year is long and impressive. I suppose that "competition" is intense. I cannot state that Walter is most deserving and would not even maintain that he deserve it at all.

What I believe is this: If I ever hear him introduced as Walter Capps, 1987 National Professor of the Year, I will say that the title is a comfortable fit.

Sincerely,

  
Robert Kerrey



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

May 20, 1987

Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr., Chancellor  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
Santa Barbara, CA 93106

Dear Chancellor Aldrich:

I was delighted to learn of Walter Capps' nomination for the CASE National Professor of the Year Award. The reputation that this nomination signals is certainly in keeping with his extraordinary record of service to the National Endowment for the Humanities. To my knowledge, no one in the history of the Endowment has rendered more varied or continuously successful service to our seminar programs than has Walter Capps.

Consider the record. Walter led his first Summer Seminar for College Teachers in 1976. This collegial study of "The Historical and Theoretical Development of Religious Studies" was repeated the following year. Then in 1978-79 he directed one of the year-long Seminars in Residence for College Teachers on "The Formation of Religious Studies: The Making of an Intellectual Discipline." In 1981 he again directed a Summer Seminar for College Teachers, this one titled "Religious Studies: The Bases of Inquiry."

When the Endowment was seeking out the best teacher-scholars it could find to apply to direct seminars in a new text-focused program for secondary school teachers, Walter was again approached and ended up leading one of the fifteen pilot seminars in this experimental program in 1983. His offering on Tocqueville's Democracy in America was a resounding success, and was repeated both in the following year and in 1986.

The Endowment experimented in 1985 with a program called Undergraduate Fellows in the Humanities. This was essentially a summer seminar program aimed at serving undergraduates during the summer between their junior and senior years. As was the case when the Summer Seminars for Secondary School Teachers program was introduced, the Endowment sought out those teacher-scholars it judged most likely to succeed in leading such seminars and invited them to apply. Walter was among the ten seminar directors selected for this pilot program, and directed a seminar titled "Religion in a Democratic Society." Consistent with all of his previous work for the seminars programs, it drew high praise from participants.

About six months following the close of seminars the Endowment staff writes to participants for their retrospective assessment of the seminar experience. Walter Capps is regularly described in these reports as an "extraordinary" or "great" or "superb" or "master" teacher. He is certainly one of the very finest teachers we deal with in the Endowment seminars programs, and I thought you would appreciate hearing that.

Yours sincerely,

*Steven S. Tigner*

Steven S. Tigner  
Division of Fellowships  
and Seminars





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE SECRETARY

May 22, 1987

Dr. Daniel Aldrich, Jr.  
Chancellor  
University of California  
Santa Barbara, California 93106

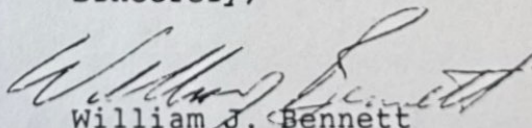
Dear Dr. Aldrich:

I understand Dr. Walter H. Capps is a nominee for the CASE Professor of the Year Award. I understand as well that you know his performance well; I write only to put in a word of support.

I have known Walter for a number of years, I knew him first when he was the Chairman of the State Humanities Program in California at the time I was Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. During this period Walter also served as Director of a number of the NEH-sponsored Summer Seminars held in various parts of the country. I know of few people who were as successful as Walter in the conduct of those seminars. He is a fine teacher and speaker. He is clear, he is interesting. He has about him an intellectual and personal integrity that I much admire. As to the performance of his regular duties, you are better able to speak.

No matter whom you decide to select, I think you ought to give Walter Capps close consideration. He is a fine professor and would be a great representative of the Program.

Sincerely,

  
William J. Bennett



# NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506



May 26, 1987

Dr. Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr.  
Chancellor  
University of California  
Santa Barbara, CA 93106

Dear Dr. Aldrich:

I am writing in support of the nomination of Dr. Walter Capps for the Professor of the Year Award sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Dr. Capps' scholarship, energy, and commitment to excellence in teaching are well known here at the National Endowment for the Humanities. I speak for the staff of the agency who have worked with him since 1976 in saying that it is most appropriate that he should be under consideration for this award.

His colleagues at the university can address his effectiveness as a teacher of undergraduate and graduate students, and scholars in religious studies will comment on his contributions to that field. My acquaintance with Dr. Capps began in 1976 when he was selected in a national competition to direct one of the NEH Summer Seminars for College Teachers, a program I directed at that time. The criteria for the selection of seminar directors included the quality of the scholarship of the director and the demonstrated ability as a master teacher. His seminar proved to be so successful and received such enthusiastic evaluations from the college teachers who attended the eight-week intensive program that he was asked to offer the seminar again in 1977 and 1981. When the NEH introduced its program of Summer Seminars for High School Teachers, Dr. Capps was invited to direct seminars several times between 1983 and 1986. Because his experience and judgment are held in high regard by the staff of NEH, he has been asked by one or other of the divisions to serve on a panel every year since 1978 to evaluate applications for funding.

His commitment to reach beyond the academy to increase public understanding of the humanities is evidenced by the leadership positions he has held in the state humanities program. As you are no doubt aware, the National Endowment for the Humanities provides support to state humanities councils mandated by Congress that now operate in each of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. The state councils are private, non-profit organizations with volunteer boards made up of academic and public members. The academic members are college and university faculty, presidents, and deans, and members of the professional staff of libraries, museums, and historical societies. The public members include civic leaders, bankers, lawyers, businessmen, and representatives of civic organizations. During his tenure on the board of the California Council for the Humanities, he was instrumental in guiding and strengthening that council and, as a result, was elected as its chairman for the 1983-1985 term. The pivotal role he played on



the California Council for the Humanities led to his election by the fifty-three state councils to the presidency of the Federation of State Humanities Councils, the national membership organization of the state councils. During his term as president, the membership voted to move the office from Minnesota to Washington, D.C., and to recruit an entirely new staff for the Federation. As president, Dr. Capps exerted his considerable talents to improving relations between the Federation and NEH, exercised perceptiveness in the appointment of the search committee for the new executive director of the Federation, and led the organization purposefully through a difficult transition period.

Believing that the efforts of scholars to reach out beyond their institutions is crucial to the well being of the humanities, especially when they do it as effectively as Dr. Capps, I am pleased to support his nomination for the Professor of the Year Award.

Sincerely yours,

*Marjorie A. Berlincourt*

Dr. Marjorie A. Berlincourt  
Director  
Division of State Programs

MAB/cjw

It is my opinion that Walter Capps is on the cutting edge of education. He knows how, as we say in television... "to bring them into the tent!"

Sincerely yours,

*Ray Carson*  
Ray Carson  
West Coast Producer  
"60 Minutes"

cc: Joan Rubin  
University Development

# CBS NEWS

A Division of CBS Inc.  
Television City  
7800 Beverly Boulevard  
Los Angeles, California 90036  
(213) 852-2202

May 27, 1987

Daniel Aldrich  
Chancellor, University of California at Santa Barbara  
Santa Barbara, California 93106

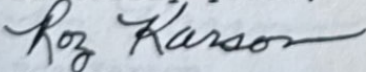
Dear Chancellor Aldrich:

It is my understanding that Religious Studies Professor, Walter H. Capps is being nominated for the distinguished CASE Professor of the Year Award.

Please kindly accept my endorsement of Dr. Capps. He has made a profound impression on my daughter, a graduating senior, who has taken two of his courses this year. She was so excited about his class on the Impact of the Viet Nam War that she called me to see if "60 Minutes" would do a story about the course. Two weeks later we were involved in production on a piece about Dr. Capps and his popular class. I have never seen students so eager to attend a lecture. Those of us working on the story were all quite impressed by Dr. Capps' unique way of presenting a course, and our executive producer was so pleased with the story that he is saving it for the beginning of our Fall Season in September of 1987.

It is my opinion that Walter Capps is on the cutting edge of education. He knows how, as we say in television... "to bring them into the tent!"

Sincerely yours,



Roz Karson  
West Coast Producer  
"60 Minutes"

cc: Joan Rabin  
University Development



Marilyn Gevirtz  
2929 East Valley Road  
Montecito, California 93108

May 27, 1987

When I was asked to be among those to write a letter on the impact that Walter Capps has had on our community, I accepted with pleasure and just a touch of concern. Pleasure, because of the great esteem in which I hold him and concern that I wouldn't be able to adequately express the meaning he has had in our lives.

His accomplishments in "raising the consciousness" not only of his students but of all of us regarding the Viet Nam War are well



known. He has the ability  
to teach and to bring out  
through his teaching and  
the force of his personality  
the best in all of us.

He seems to be able to speak  
of those "taboo" subjects,  
religion and politics, and  
unite all who hear him  
in trying to understand, to  
be open and to be truly  
thoughtful regardless of  
their religious or political  
affiliations.

When a professor can  
reach out and so touch  
everyone with whom he comes  
in contact then the entire  
community is enriched.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Gevirtz



# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO



SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST  
COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93106  
(805) 961-3506

May 28, 1987

To CASE Professor of the Year Selection Committee:

Professor Capps, is an outstanding teacher and scholar. He approaches his undergraduate teaching with innovation and enthusiasm and he is involved as well in graduate affairs.

Capps is the instructor of Religious Studies 155, "The Impact of the Vietnam War." Judging from enrollment figures, it is the most popular class in the UC system and perhaps even in American higher education. The course was first offered in 1979 as the premier course in the nation in this field. Now more than 400 colleges and universities offer similar instruction. Capps's class is the subject of a double-segmented CBS News "60 Minutes" program, scheduled for September 13 or 20, 1987.

I characterize Walter Capps' teaching as innovative for a number of reasons. First, he uses thematic rather than chronological organizational schemes for his courses, focusing on the impact of the Vietnam war, religion and politics in America today, and the monastic impulse. Second, Capps employs eye-witness accounts, and narrative presentations in his teaching. His classroom becomes a kind of theatre, where important national figures as well as nonacademic members of the local community share their experiences and wisdom with Capps and his students. Recent visitors have included George McGovern, Ed Bradley, Governor Bob Kerrey, UC President David Gardner, Trappist monks, political theorists for the new religious right, members of Vietnam War Veterans leadership, officers of the moral majority, Mayor Sheila Lodge, and local politicians. Finally, Capps's teaching style is functionally cross-disciplinary, and each of his polished lectures is a self contained unit.

Walter Capps understands that the teaching profession belongs in a larger context. He regularly integrates undergraduate education into the life of the community by having students give Memorial Day addresses at official Santa Barbara ceremonies and by encouraging them to volunteer their time at local social service agencies. The SB Vet Center, for example, was started as a result of his Vietnam course. Capps believes strongly that the university campus is not the only place where learning can occur. Whenever possible, he incorporates off-campus travel into his course plans. He has led trips to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and he regularly arranges student trips to monasteries in connection with his "Monastic Impulse" course.



Let me close by talking about a new course Walter Capps is preparing for the 1987/88 academic year: "Voices of the Stranger." Capps came to me with the goal of acquainting students with the attitudes, ways of looking at life, and individual and collective experiences of those whom the majority population, without such assistance, would tend to view from a distance. The course would cover topics such as the Native American way of life, what it is like to be a person of color in a predominantly white society, and what it is to be a woman within societal structures that have given preference to men. The course will also look at the specific situations of such people as Vietnamese now living in the U.S., Mexican-Americans now trying to make or find their way on this side of the border, and persons and groups in various kinds of vocations and occupations that tend to be somewhat marginal to the intellectual scope of a college and university. Rarely as provost do I have occasions appropriate for spontaneous enthusiasm, but Capps's new course thrills me. Capps has a good sense of drama, his lectures are spell-binding, and he can effectively motivate students' intellect through an emotional experience. I have proposed that Capps work with me to build a series of courses such as this one which will enrich the undergraduate's understanding of contemporary society.

As you no doubt sense, I have enormous respect for Walter Capps, both as a person and as a teacher. I believe he very much deserves to be recognized as CASE Professor of the Year. If he is awarded that honor, you can be sure that he will continue to inspire students, other teachers, and members of the local and extended communities with the joys of being exposed to his compassionate and human approach to the pursuit of knowledge.

Sincerely,

*David A. Sprecher*

David A. Sprecher  
Provost

DAS:cms



# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO



SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

DAVID PIERPONT GARDNER  
President

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720  
(415) 642-1441

28 May 1987

Acting Chancellor Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr.  
Chancellor's Office  
5221 Cheadle Hall  
University of California  
Santa Barbara, CA 93106

Dear Chancellor Aldrich:

I am very pleased to write in support of your nomination of Walter H. Capps, Professor of Religious Studies at the Santa Barbara campus, for the Professor of the Year Award sponsored by the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education.

During the past two years Professor Capps has played a key role in two significant undertakings initiated by the Office of the President of the University of California. Dr. Capps was a member of the University of California Task Force on Lower Division Education which issued its report in June 1986 entitled "Lower Division Education in the University of California." The Task Force report has received widespread attention and has been the catalyst for a number of initiatives being pursued on the nine campuses of the University of California to enhance lower division undergraduate education.

Another example of University-wide service performed by Dr. Capps is his recent work as a member of the Joint Committee to Advise the President on the Selection of a Chancellor for the Santa Barbara campus. The Joint Committee was comprised of Regents, faculty from the Santa Barbara campus and faculty from other UC campuses, students, a staff representative, and an alumni representative. The committee, which was advisory to the President of the University of California, relied on the faculty contingent of the group to act as a subcommittee for the purpose of screening the 240-plus candidates for the position of Chancellor of the Santa Barbara campus and to develop a list of about 15 candidates for consideration by the full search committee. Professor Capps was selected by his fellow faculty committee members to chair the faculty candidate screening subcommittee. This responsibility entailed a tremendous time commitment on the part of Dr. Capps and his service in this capacity was effective, thorough, and did much to facilitate the efficient functioning of the search committee.

Professor Capps also has made important contributions to education on the national scene. Among his many activities are membership on the peer review panels of the National Endowment for the Humanities and of the Woodrow Wilson Fellowships program, as well as membership on the advisory panel for the



Acting Chancellor Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr.  
28 May 1987  
Page 2

National Humanities Center. In addition, he has been called upon to testify twice in support of the humanities before a U.S. Senate committee chaired by Senator Claiborne Pell.

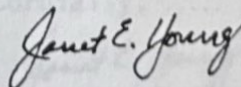
Professor Capps also was invited to serve on the steering committee established four years ago under the auspices of the National Endowment for the Humanities to attempt to identify ways to help improve the ability of high school teachers to teach humanities. The work of this steering committee generated a series of seminars offered each summer in several regions of the United States to help high school teachers hone their teaching abilities in the humanities. Dr. Capps has taught at one of the summer seminars each summer since the inception of the program -- in so doing, he has devoted more classroom time to the seminars than any other individual in the country.

On the regional front, Professor Capps has been appointed to the Board of the "Humanitas - Los Angeles Education Project." This group was formed as an outgrowth of the report "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform," presented in 1983 by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, chaired by University of California President David P. Gardner. The "Humanitas" project is intended to improve the quality of humanities and moral value instruction in the high schools.

As you know, Dr. Capps also has taught the most popular class on the Santa Barbara campus for the past several years. The demand for enrollment in his course on "The Impact of the Vietnam War on American Culture" attests to Dr. Capps' proficiency in the classroom. As a firsthand observer of one of the class sessions last winter, I was impressed with the evident attentiveness of the students and observed the aura of excitement and interest which pervaded the packed auditorium. Last quarter over 900 students enrolled in the course, while over 1,400 students had requested admission to the class. This course also attracted the attention of CBS "Sixty Minutes" which will air a segment on the class during the first show of the fall season.

Professor Capps is a respected scholar, an author and lecturer of note, a superb teacher and a credit to the University of California. He also is active in the Santa Barbara community. He is richly deserving of the Professor of the Year Award and I am pleased to convey this letter endorsing your nomination of Dr. Capps for this honor.

Cordially,



Janet E. Young  
Special Assistant to the President

cc: President Gardner



Deadline: June 1st

# Professor of the Year

## Entry Instructions

- 
- Complete this nomination form and attach to it: 1) a one-page, single-spaced Curriculum Vitae; and 2) *no more than six*, one-page letters of supporting nomination or testimony from former students, colleagues, the president or academic dean, or others who endorse the nomination.
  - Mail your entry *to arrive by June 1st* to: CASE Professor of the Year, Eleven Dupont Circle, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036.
  - Please enclose with your entry a fee of \$30 for each nomination.
- 

### *Name, Academic Rank, and Discipline of Nominee:*

Walter H. Capps, Professor, Religious Studies

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***Institution:*** University of California, Santa Barbara

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***Address:*** 4724 South Hall, Santa Barbara, CA., 93106

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***Person or Group Nominating:*** Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr., Acting Chancellor

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***Contact Person:*** Robert S. Michaelsen, The Vice Chancellor, Acting      ***Telephone:*** 805 961-2126

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### *Professors Current Teaching Log (list course titles and levels):*

RS 100, From Augustine to Luther, upper division

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RS 153, Religion and Politics in Contemporary America, upper division

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RS 155, Religion and the Impact of the Vietnam War, upper division

---

RS 235, Seminar in Western Religious Thought, graduate

---

RS200A (team taught), Proseminar in History and Theory of Religion, graduate

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*Attach this form to your nomination materials.*