

SYLLABUS

R.123.Religions of India: Hinduism and Buddhism
Fall, 2006

MWF 11:30-12:20

Comenius-218

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Ofc. Comenius-204
MWF 2:00-3:00
TR 1:00-2:00

Course Content.

In this course we will examine the beliefs, values, and practices of South Asian Hinduism and Buddhism. We will examine selected foundational texts in the traditions, including *The Upanishads*, *The Bhagavad-Gita* and *The Dhammapada*. Attention will also be paid to village Hinduism which shapes and is shaped by the religious lives of most Hindus. Lastly, we will study the influence of religion on the life and thought of Mahatma Gandhi who led India in its struggle against colonial rule of Great Britain.

Teaching and Learning Objectives.

This course is designed so that students will:
(1) develop an understanding of the methods and perspectives proper to the academic study of religion; (2) develop an informed appreciation for the beliefs, values and practices of South Asian Hinduism and Buddhism; (3) improve their ability to analyze and interpret culturally unfamiliar texts; (4) become more aware of their own cultural and personal assumptions, beliefs, and biases; (5) develop skills to think critically about their own and others' worldviews; (6) develop an appreciation for writing as a way both to clarify for themselves the content of the course and to communicate their understanding to others.

Format: Lecture/Discussion

Students should come to class prepared to discuss the texts and any problems they might have had understanding them. Writing-to-learn assignments, whether outside or inside class, are intended to help students grasp the material and re-present it in their own words. Participation in discussions is expected.

Evaluation

(1) Writing-to-learn assignments. Frequent but short writing-to-learn assignments will encourage students to be actively engaged with the material and prepared for in-class discussions. These assignments will be written either at home or in class at the beginning of the period. They will

(normally) be graded "S" or "U". A missed assignment is automatically given a "U" and cannot be made up (except in unusual circumstances where it will receive a check mark noting that it was turned in). If 80% or more of the graded assignments receive an "S", a student's final grade will be raised one level (e.g. C to C+). If 50% or fewer of graded assignments are graded Satisfactory, the final grade will be reduced by one-level (C to C-). Otherwise, it will not change (51%-79%).

(2) Essay Exams. Three non-cumulative essay exams (including the final) will enable the student to demonstrate his or her grasp of the material under consideration. Analytic as well as synthetic skills will be evaluated.

(3) Participation. There is no separate grade for participation. However, the instructor reserves the right to reward participation of a consistent and high quality where deemed appropriate, e.g. when a final grade average is borderline.

(4) Plagiarism. Zero tolerance on either a writing assignment or an essay exam. An automatic "F" for the course. Consult the "Academic Honesty Policy" in the Student Handbook or clarify with the instructor.

REQUIRED TEXTS

<http://sanatan.intnet.mu/upanishads> (Upanishad selections)

Easwaran, Eknath, trans. *The Bhagavad-Gita*. Tomales, CA: Nilgiri Press, 1985.

Easwaran, Eknath, trans. *The Dhammapada*. Tomales, CA: Nilgiri Press, 1986.

Fuller, C.J., *The Camphor Flame*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Fowler, Jeaneane. *Hinduism: Beliefs and Practices*. Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 1997.

Gandhi, Mahatma. *All Men are Brothers*. New York: Continuum Publishers, 1992.

***Note: This syllabus is subject to change if necessary.

COURSE OUTLINE

<u>Date Due</u>		<u>Topic</u>
August	28	Introduction to the Course
		I. HINDUISM
		A. THE VEDIC RELIGION
August	30	Vedic Religion I Read: Fowler, Ch. 12
September	01	Vedic Religion II

- September 04 Read: Fowler, Ch. 13
September 06 No Class. Labor Day.
Transition to the Upanishads
Read: Fowler, Ch. 14
- September 08 B. Text: *THE UPANISHADS*
Katha Upanishad
<http://sanatan.intnet.mu/upanishads/katha.htm>
Part Chapter:Verse(s)
One 1:1-9&20-29; 2:1-5&18-25; 3:3-17
Two 1:1-15; 2:6-15
- September 11 Brihadaranyaka Upanishad
<http://sanatan.intnet.mu/upanishads/brihadaranyaka.htm>
Part Ch:Vv
Three 1:1-2; 8; 9:1
Four 3:31-38; 4:1-25; 5:1-7
- September 13 Chandogya Upanishad
<http://sanatan.intnet.mu/upanishads/chhandogya.htm>
Part Ch:Vv
Three 14
Six 1:1-7; 2; 9-13
Eight 7-12
- September 15 Mundaka Upanishad
<http://sanatan.intnet.mu/upanishads/mundaka.htm>
First Mundaka 1; 2: 7-13
Second Mundaka 1
Third Mundaka 1:1-8; 2
- September 18 Kena and Isa Upanishads
<http://sanatan.intnet.mu/upanishads/kena.htm> (Complete)
<http://sanatan.intnet.mu/upanishads/isa.htm> (Complete)
- September 20 Varnashramadharma
Read: Fowler, Chs. 1,3,4
- II. HINDUISM: DEVELOPMENT
- September 22 A. The Rise of Classical Hinduism
The Bhagavad-Gita Translated by E. Easwaran,
Read: "Introduction"
- September 25 B. TEXT: *The Bhagavad-Gita*
Arjuna and Krishna
Gita, Chs. 1&2
- September 27 Action or Contemplation?
Gita, Chs. 3&4
- September 29 Yoga and Selfless Action
Gita, Chs. 5&6

October 02 Krishna as the Lord
Gita, Chs. 9-11
October 04 The Way of Devotion
Gita, Chs. 12-13
October 06 Exam #1
October 09 No Class Fall Break

October 11 C. Village or Popular Hinduism
The Rise of Devotionalism
Fowler, Ch. 5
October 13 Vaishnavism, Krishna, and Radha
Fuller, pp. 155-163
Online Assignment: Krishna
October 16 Shaivism, Shiva and Kali
Fuller, Ch. 2
October 18 Worship (puja)
Fuller, Ch. 3
October 20 Sacrifice (bali)
Fuller, Ch. 4
October 23 Saints, and Swamis
Fuller, pp. 163-181
Video: "Four Holy Men"
October 25 Pilgrimage
Fuller, Ch. 9
October 27 Festivals
Fowler, Ch. 6
Video: "Holi"
October 30 Goddesses and Women
Fuller, Ch.8
November 01 Handling Misfortune
Fuller, Ch. 10
November 03 EXAM #2

III. BUDDHISM

November 06 A. Early Buddhism
The Buddha
Read: Easwaran, *The Dhammapada*, "Introduction", pp.7-33
November 08 The Basic Teachings
Read: Easwaran, "Introduction", pp.34-46; 58-72

November 10 B. Text: *The Dhammapada* (Path of Truth)
Chs. 1-8
November 13 Chs. 9-14
November 15 Chs. 15-20
November 17 Chs. 21-26

November 20 The Bodhisattva Ideal
"Introduction" to *The Way of the Bodhisattva*
On Reserve

November 22&24 Thanksgiving Break

November 27 Theravada Buddhism: Sri Lanka
Video: "In the Footprints of the Buddha"

November 29 Buddhism in South Asia
Research Online

December 01 No Class (See December 03 Sunday)

V. MAHATMA GANDHI: RELIGION, POLITICS
AND THE BIRTH OF FREE INDIA

December 03 Text: *All Men are Brothers* by Mahatma Gandhi
7:00 p.m. FILM: *Gandhi* (Prosser) 7:00P.M.
Read: Handout

December 04 Religion, Truth and Ethics
Read: Gandhi, pp.51-76

December 06 Ahimsa, Non-Violence
Read: Gandhi, pp.77-97

December 08 Self-Discipline, Poverty and Plenty
Read: Gandhi, pp.97-112; 118-125

December 11 Democracy and Women
Read: Gandhi. pp.126-137; 146-152

T.B.A. FINAL EXAM