

RL 257A Hinduism: Past and Present

DePauw University, Spring 2012



12:40 P.M. – 2:10 P.M. TR

AH 222

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Religious Studies Department

Emison 205

Office hours: 10:15-11:45 a.m. T/R

Course Description:

Who is a Hindu? What is a mantra? Why are gods and goddesses important? In this course we aim to answer these and a plethora of other questions about various forms of religious experience and expression in Hinduism. Relevant historical background information is surveyed in order to help assess continuity and change in learned and vernacular Hindu religious practices. The course objectives are to explore the historical development of Hinduism, to gain an understanding of the beliefs and practices of Hindu practitioners, acquire insight into Hinduism as a lived meaningful experience, and to engage critically and sensitively with course materials. We will be using primary and secondary texts, films, web sites, and a podcast or two as our entry into forms of Hinduism historically and in the modern world.

Course Objectives:

It is expected that by the end of the course students will have achieved the following:

1. increased religious literacy so as to have greater knowledge of, awareness about, and respect for forms of Hinduism;
2. ability to examine the historical context of Hindu traditions and learn the various human factors that influenced their creation/ change;
3. ability to read, analyze, and discuss source materials to identify and evaluate main points, supporting evidence, and perspective.
4. increased facility to successfully communicate course knowledge in oral and written form.

Required Texts:

- *Introducing Hinduism*. Hillary Rodrigues. New York and London: Routledge, 2006.
 - Listed on the syllabus as "IH."
- *The Rāmāyaṇa*. R.K. Narayan. Penguin Classics, [1972] 2006.
- Other required course readings are available on Moodle and are listed in *italics* in the schedule.

Course grade is based on the following:

Participation: 35% of total grade (Two areas)

1. *Class engagement*: your consistent and alert presence in the classroom; preparation of the course readings and discussion topics; active and thoughtful verbal and written reflections; and thorough

preparation of any assignments. You will bring the required readings to each class session, and you will be prepared with questions, comments, written notes about and responses to (see below) the readings in order to engage in informed discussion. You are expected to come to class on time, attend class, and to attend the entire class. (Fulfills course objectives 1, 2, 3, 4).

- Unless I provide you with directed questions, your objective in reading is to analyze:
 - who is the speaker/author?
 - what is the purpose of the reading (*i.e.* why did the author write the selection)?
 - what are the main points of the reading?
 - how are those main points proven in the text?
 - how does the reading enhance what you know about the subject?
 - what questions does the reading prompt for you?

2. *One-minute papers*: At the end of some class sessions, you will be presented with a question relevant to that day's topic. If you have prepared the assigned readings and paid close attention in class you will have no problem answering the question. Your papers will be graded on a plus/minus/zero scale. (Fulfills course objectives 1, 2, 3, 4).

Exam #1, #2, #3 (15% each = 45%)

The in-class exams will cover *all* the course materials to that date. Exam questions may be multiple choice, T/F, matching, fill in the blank, short answer and/or brief essay. A study guide will be distributed one week prior to the exams. (Fulfills course objectives 3, 4).

Final Exam (20%)

The final examination is a cumulative exam that pertains to *all* material addressed in the course during the semester. The questions may be multiple choice, T/F, short answer, fill in the blank, and/or brief essay. A study guide and possible essay questions will be distributed prior to the exam. (Fulfills course objectives 3, 4).

Important Course Notes:

E-mail and communication: E-mail is the best way to communicate with me outside of class. I generally check e-mail and respond to messages between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. on most days however, please allow up to 24 hours for a response.

Moodle is used for this course and I will post items of interest to the class. You are expected to check your DePauw e-mail regularly. Contact me with questions pertinent to class content and topics, and to seek clarification on course content.

Office hours: Make use of my office hours; this practice will benefit the your course participation grade. I have an open-door policy for office hours, so feel free to visit.

Absences and lateness:

Course attendance is a must. You are responsible for obtaining class notes from classmates if you miss class. There are no make-ups for missed work due to illness or tardiness.

- If you have an extended illness or if you have a serious emergency that may impact your performance in the course, contact the Dean of Student Support and me as soon as possible.

- A penalty for tardiness is counted against your participation grade, therefore habitual lateness will adversely your grade.

Classroom conduct:

Laptops and e-readers are welcome in class on the condition that the device is used to take notes and access course readings. All other electronic devices are to be turned off and stowed for the duration of class. This is for the purpose of providing me and your fellow students with your undivided attention during class. If, at any time, you are found to be texting, e-mailing, blogging, vlogging, Facebooking, Tweeting, e*Trading, or to be otherwise engaged in activities not immediately related to course participation, you will earn a zero participation grade for that day.

Over the course of the semester we will address a variety of topics on religion and subjects that intersect with religion. It is of utmost importance that students listen and speak to each other with respect and speak from an opinion that is founded on course preparation. Disagreement on course topics is acceptable and welcome as long as that opinion is informed, prepared, and respectful.

Grade scale:

My philosophy regarding grading is that you *earn* your grade; I do not *give* grades and I do not grade on a curve.

A: 93-100	B-: 80-82	D+: 67-69
A-: 90-92	C+: 77-79	D: 63-66
B+: 87-89	C: 73-76	D-: 60-62
B: 83-86	C-: 70-72	F: 59 and below

Academic Honesty

You are responsible for submitting work of your own creation and that uses a proper citation format. You are responsible for informing yourself about the DePauw student code regarding academic integrity and plagiarism, per the DePauw University Student Handbook:

<http://www.depauw.edu/handbooks/student/>

Any work submitted for this course that is found to contain plagiarized content (copied, not cited, or claiming the work of another as a your own) or is found to be the result of cheating will earn a grade of zero, and your standing in this course and in the University will be in jeopardy. Claiming ignorance of the DePauw code is not a valid excuse. If you require help in recognizing plagiarism, the library provides additional help.

Disability Accommodation

If you require course modification and/ or accommodation, you must provide me with appropriate documentation within the first two weeks of the course. Contact Student Disability Services for further information and instruction.

<http://www.depauw.edu/academics/academic-resources/student-guidance/students-with-disabilities/>

Course Schedule

Readings, assignments and exams are listed on their due date.
The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus at any time.

Week	Date	Unit	Topic	Readings	Assignment/ Exam
1	T 31 Jan	Course Introduction	What is Hinduism?		
	Th 2 Feb	<i>Vedas</i>	Vedic World	IH, pp. 1-7, 17-21, 24-34	
2	T 7 Feb		<i>Vedas</i>	<i>Rig Veda Ritual and Mantra</i>	
	Th 9 Feb	<i>Upanishads</i>	<i>Upanishads</i>	IH, pp. 34-39; <i>Upanishads</i>	
3	T 14 Feb	Thought and Practice	<i>Karma, Samsara, Mokṣa</i>	IH, pp. 45-54	
	R 16 Feb		<i>Karma, Samsara, Mokṣa</i>		
4	T 21 Feb		<i>Dharma: Purity, Law and Social Order</i>	IH, pp. 55-73, 76-104	
	R 23 Feb		<i>Dharma</i>	<i>Laws of Manu; Purity</i>	
5	T 28 Feb				Exam #1 Start reading <i>Rāmāyaṇa</i>
	R 1 Mar	Individual Body, Social Body	Yoga and Renunciation; <i>Film: The Rolling Saint</i>	IH, pp. 125-128	
6	T 6 Mar	The Epics	The <i>Rāmāyaṇa</i>	IH, pp. 136-151	
	R 8 Mar		Film: <i>Sita Sings the Blues</i>	<i>Rāmāyaṇa</i> , Ch 1-7	
7	T 13 Mar		Film: <i>Sita Sings the Blues</i>	<i>Rāmāyaṇa</i> , Ch 8- Epilogue	
	R 15 Mar	Gods and Goddesses	Krishna Film: <i>Loving Krishna</i>	IH, pp. 164-167, 177- 184, 199-213 <i>Bhagavata Purāṇa</i>	
8	T 20 Mar				Exam #2
	R 22 Mar		Shiva Worship	<i>The Origin of Linga Worship</i>	
9	T 27 Mar				Spring Break
	R 29 Mar				Spring Break
10	T 3 Apr				No Class
	R 5 Apr				No class
11	T 10 Apr		Devī Film: <i>Devī: The Goddess</i>	<i>Devi Mahatmya</i>	
	R 12 Apr	Devotion and Worship	<i>Bhakti</i>	<i>Yao, Giribara He; Basavanna 820; Mira</i>	

12	T 17 Apr		<i>Darshan</i>	IH, 222-240; <i>Darshan</i> ; <i>Puja</i>	
	R 19 Apr		Darshan Film: <i>Puja: Expressions of Devotion</i>		
13	T 24 Apr				Exam #3
	R 26 Apr	Ritual Year and Ritual Life	Festival Film: <i>Holi Hey</i>	<i>The Feast of Love</i>	
14	T 1 May		Women and Ritual Film: <i>Modern Brides</i>	IH, pp. 76-77, 80-84, 96-101; <i>Sci. Amer</i> podcast	
	Th 3 May	Hinduism Abroad	Global Gurus Film: <i>Hare Krishna: Hiders or Seekers</i>	<i>Guru's Body</i>	
15	T 8 May		Hinduism in the diaspora	TBA	
	R 10 May			Closing thoughts	
Finals Week	W 16 May				Scheduled Final Exam 1-4 p.m.

Have a great semester!

Hindu Institutions

Hindu Temple of Central Indiana
3350 North German Church Road
Indianapolis, 46234

<http://www.htci.org/>

See "Events Calendar" and "Temple Info" links

Before making a first visit, contact Ms. Vasu Vasudevan, Education and Outreach Committee organizer

htcivasu@yahoo.com

BAPS (Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha) Shri Swaminarayan

350 N County Road 900 East

Avon, 46123

317- 271-1577

<http://www.swaminarayan.org/globalnetwork/america/indianapolis.htm>