

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF THE HUMANITIES
Humanities 4904 A (Winter 2011)
Mahatma Gandhi Across Cultures

Mondays 11:35-2:25
Paterson Hall 2A46

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00 - 4:00
(Or by appointment)

This seminar is a critical examination of the life and thought of one of the pivotal and iconic figures of the twentieth century, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi – better known as the Mahatma, the great soul. Gandhi is a bridge figure across cultures in that his thought and action were inspired by both Indian and Western traditions. And, of course, in that his influence has spread across the globe. He was shaped by his upbringing in Gujarat India and the influences of Hindu and Jain piety. He identified as a *Sanatani* Hindu. Yet he was also influenced by Western thought: the New Testament, Henry David Thoreau, John Ruskin, Count Leo Tolstoy. We will read these authors: Thoreau, *On Civil Disobedience*; Ruskin, *Unto This Last*; Tolstoy, *A Letter to a Hindu* and *The Kingdom of God is Within You*. We will read Gandhi's autobiography, *My Experiments with Truth*, and a variety of texts from his *Collected Works* covering the social, political, and religious dimensions of his struggle for a free India and an India of social justice. We will read selections from his commentary on the Bhagavad Gita, the book that was his daily inspiration and that also, ironically, was the inspiration of his assassin.

We will encounter Gandhi's clash over communal politics and caste with another architect of modern India – Bimrao Ambedkar, author of the constitution, Buddhist convert, and leader of the "untouchable" community. The seminar also considers Gandhi's influence on figures from Martin Luther King Jr to Nelson Mandela, or the 14th Dalai Lama, and a host of activists and voices of dissent. Gandhi's impact (or appropriation) is felt in movements *against*: war, nuclear proliferation, and (more recently) globalization. And in diverse movements *for*: peace, environment, animal rights, and inter-religious dialogue.

The seminar allows Humanities students to revisit some of the texts and themes from the Indian tradition encountered in first year and to see them played out in the life of a modern figure who belongs to India, and also to the world.

REQUIRED TEXTS

[These titles are available at Octopus Books, 3rd Avenue at Bank.]

M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. Foreword by Sissela Bok. Boston: Beacon Press, 1993
978-0-8070-5909-8

M. K. Gandhi, *'Hind Swaraj' and Other Writings*. Centenary Edition. ed. Anthony J. Parel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009
978-0-521-14602-9

Mahatma Gandhi, *The Essential Writings*. New Edition. ed. Judith M. Brown. Oxford World's Classics. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008
978-0-19-280720

The Bhagavad Gita According to Gandhi, ed. John Stohmeier. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2009.
978-I-55643-800-4

[Copies of all additional readings will be available in the library and also on WebCT]

REQUIREMENTS

Reading Responses 20%

A one to two page (double-spaced) response due in class each week on the assigned readings. These responses should include a question you would like to see addressed by the group. Eleven are required, the best ten will be counted, at 2 points each. These are to be handed in at class, late responses are graded down 50%, i.e., they are graded out of 1 instead of 2. These responses are also a measure of attendance and participation designed to promote informed engagement at the weekly meeting which is the *sine qua non* of success in this course. Note: ***to miss more than three of the weekly meetings is to forfeit credit for the course.***

Seminar Presentation and Participation 15%

Each student will be responsible for presenting on the readings for the week once in the semester. You will be graded on the subsequent submission of an approximately 4 page write-up of your presentation. This write-up is an expansion of the 1-2 page response that you would be preparing anyway. It is different though in two ways: 1) It should articulate several questions you would like us to respond to, and 2) approximately 200 words of this write-up is to consist of an abstract that is to be provided at the start of the seminar.

Essay Proposal 10%

Suggested topics will be provided. The proposal indicates your choice from among the topics. It is to consist of a working title, a working bibliography, and a preliminary abstract that details a preliminary thesis statement. The tentative thesis statement should indicate how you intend to focus the chosen topic and the argument to be developed. Due Feb. 7 Note: This proposal is an absolutely essential feature of the course. Decisions have to be made early on your topic as your research essay will probably necessitate using inter-library loan and other research avenues that necessitate being well underway long before your paper presentations on March 28 and April 4.

“Conference” presentation of your research essay 15%

The Paper Conference:

Our final two meeting dates will be devoted to presentations to the group of your paper. Each student will present on his or her paper for 15 - 20 minutes followed by 10 minutes for questions and discussion. You need to have a completed version of your paper ready for this day. Papers will be amended based on feedback given on this date before final submission.

Research Essay 40%

A research essay of (15 - 20 typed, double-spaced pages). Topics must be approved by the instructor. The original copy of your proposal must be resubmitted with the paper, essays will not be marked without it. Essays must have a clearly articulated thesis. Essays must also include an abstract. **Due April 11.** **Note:** late papers (except with medical documentation) are docked 4 percentage points per day.

Note: All course requirements listed above must be fulfilled to gain credit for this course

RESOURCES

The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi. Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1958-94. DS481.G3 A13 1958
[Our library has 52 of the 90 volumes. The University of Ottawa has a complete set.]

Bhikkhu Parekh, *Gandhi: A Very Short Introduction.* OUP, 1997 is highly recommended. This is also available as an e-book through the Carleton library.

Dinanath Gopal Tendulkar, *Mahatma: The Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi* (Eight volumes). Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1960-66. DS481.G3T4 1960

Web Resources:

www.gandhiserve.org

www.gandhitopia.org

<http://mkgandhi.org>

<http://www.gandhiserve.org/cwmg/cwmg.html>

Collected Works (but please read note on the controversy over the revised electronic edition)

<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/southasia/History/Gandhi/gandhi.html>

This is the site of UCLA historian Vinay Lal who has written extensively on Gandhi

HUMS 4904A Schedule

Mondays 11:35 - 2:25 [each session is in two halves: A and B]

Jan. 3	A	Introducing the course. Attenborough's <i>Gandhi</i>
	B	Reading: Richard Grenier, "The Gandhi Nobody Knows" <i>Commentary</i> , 75:3 (1983): 59-72. Veena Rani Howard, "Gandhi, The Mahatma: Evolving Narratives and Native Discourse in Gandhi Studies." <i>Religion Compass</i> 1/3 (2007): 380-397.

- Jan. 10 A Historical background to British India.
Reading: Autobiography Part I
- B Reading: Thoreau *On Civil Disobedience* (1849)
Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), *Walden and Other Writings*. ed. Brooks Atkinson.
New York: The Modern Library, 2000.
- Jan. 17 A Reading: Autobiography Part II
- B Reading: Ruskin, *Unto This Last*. Essay 1 “The Roots of Honour”, Essay 4 “*Ad Valorem*”
John Ruskin (1819-1900), *Unto this Last and Other Writings*, ed. Clive Wilmer. London:
Penguin, 1997.
- Jan. 24 A Reading: Autobiography Part III
Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*. Ch. 1
Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), *The Kingdom of God is Within You*. trans. Constance Garnett.
New York: Dover, 2006 [1894].
- B Reading: Tolstoy: “A Letter to a Hindu” (1908) Appendix A in Kalidas Nag, *Tolstoy
and Gandhi*. Patna: Pustak Bhandar, 1950.
- Jan. 31 A Gandhi and Ghaffar Khan. Guest: T. C. McLuhan
Reading: James L. Rowell, “Abdul Ghaffar Khan: An Islamic Gandhi.”
Political Theology. 10.4 (2009): 591-606.
- B Reading: Autobiography Part IV
- Feb. 7 A Reading: *Hind Swaraj*
- B Reading: Autobiography Part V
- Feb. 14 A On Religion
Reading: *The Essential Writings*, pp. 39 - 53
- B On Religion.
Reading: Noel Salmond, “Both iconoclast and idolater: Gandhi on the worship of
images.” *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 31/3-4 (2002): 373 - 390.
- Feb. 21 BREAK

- Feb. 28 A On caste
 Reading: *The Essential Writings*, pp. 210 - 228
- B Gandhi vs. Ambedkar
 Reading: Bimrao Ambedkar, *What Congress and Gandhi Have Done to the Untouchables*,
 ch. 11, "Gandhism: The Doom of the Untouchables"
 in *Writings and Speeches*. vol 9. Education Department: Government of Maharashtra,
 1991.
- Mar. 7 A Gandhi's Constructive Program
 Reading: *The Essential Writings*, pp. 161-184
- B Gandhi and the Environment
 Reading: Larry Shinn, "The Inner Logic of Gandhian Ecology," in *Hinduism and Ecology*,
 ed. Christopher Chapple and Mary Evelyn Tucker. Cambridge, MA: Harvard
 University Press, 2000.
- Mar. 14 A Gandhi on the Bhagavad Gita
 Reading: *The Bhagavad Gita According to Gandhi*, Gandhi's Introduction pp. xv - xxiv
- B *The Bhagavad Gita According to Gandhi*, chs. 1-3, 18
- Mar. 21 A Gandhian Non-Violence as Political Action
 Reading: *The Essential Writings*, pp. 309-373
- B The postmodern Gandhi?
 Reading: "Postmodern Gandhi" in Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph,
Postmodern Gandhi and Other Essays. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Mar. 28 A Paper Conference
- B Paper Conference
- Apr. 4 A Paper Conference
- B Concluding discussion
 [Papers due April 11]

REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in “*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*”

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100 (12)	B = 73-76 (8)	C - = 60-62 (4)
A = 85-89 (11)	B- = 70-72 (7)	D+ = 57-59 (3)
A- = 80-84 (10)	C+ = 67-69 (6)	D = 53-56 (2)
B+ = 77-79 (9)	C = 63-66 (5)	D - = 50-52 (1)

F	Failure. Assigned 0.0 grade points
ABS	Absent from final examination, equivalent to F
DEF	Official deferral (see “Petitions to Defer”)
FND	Failure with no deferred exam allowed -- assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from **FALL TERM** courses is **DEC. 6, 2010**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 5, 2011**.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by the last official day to withdraw from classes in each term. For more details visit the PMC website: carleton.ca/pmc/accommodations/

PETITIONS TO DEFER

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a **FINAL** assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply a deferral of examination/assignment. If you are applying for a deferral due to illness you will be required to see a physician in order to confirm illness and obtain a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or assignment deadline. This supporting documentation must specify the date of onset of the illness, the degree of incapacitation, and the expected date of recovery.

If you are applying for a deferral for reasons other than personal illness, please **contact** the Registrar’s Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept.

Deferrals of assignments must be supported by confirmation of the assignment due date, for example a copy of the course outline specifying the due date and any documented extensions from the course instructor.

Deferral applications for examination or assignments must be submitted within **5 working days** of the original final exam.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Greek and Roman Studies Office 520-2809	300 Paterson
Religion Office 520-2100	2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500	300 Tory
Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937	501 Uni-Centre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-2600 Ext. 1125	4 th Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125	4 th Floor Library