

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF THE HUMANITIES
RELIGION PROGRAM: RELI 2510A WINTER 2010
INTRODUCTION TO HINDUISM

Mondays & Wednesdays - 10:05-11:25 pm – ME 3275

Instructor: Dr. Richard MacPhail
Office Hours: Mon./Wed. – 2:45-3:30 - Paterson Hall 2A40
Email: Richard_MacPhail@Carleton.ca
Voicemail: 613-520-2600 ext. 2930

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course surveys major features of the Hindu tradition from earliest historical times to the present day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed so that you 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; (3) improve your ability to analyze and interpret culturally unfamiliar materials; (4) become more aware of your own cultural and personal assumptions, beliefs, and biases; (5) develop skills to think critically about your own and others' worldviews; (6) develop an appreciation for writing as a way both to clarify for yourself the content of the course and to communicate your understanding to others.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Hillary P. Rodrigues, *Introducing Hinduism*, New York and London: Routledge, 2006. [ISBN-13: 978-0-415-39269-3 (pbk)]

W. J. Johnson, *The Bhagavad Gita*. Oxford University Press, Oxford World's Classics, 2008. [ISBN-13: 978-0-199-53812-6 (pbk)].

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Consistent attendance is expected.

Assignments will be based on the textbooks, other readings, and lecture material.

- 1) **Five brief written assignments** (250-300 words - 10% each, totaling 50%). These exercises will vary in character, and are to be submitted electronically within one week of being assigned.
- 3) Mar. 17. **Research Abstract** due (100-150 words).
- 5) Mar. 24. **Research Assignment** due (2000-3000 words - 20%).
- 6) **Final Examination** scheduled by SES (2 hours, 30%). Ten short descriptive answers and two interpretive essays. The final exam will be cumulative and may include material from any part of the course.

Students must complete all written assignments and the final examination to receive credit for the course. Do not plan to travel on examination dates.

LECTURE AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE:

This schedule may vary according to class comprehension and pace.

Each reading and media segment is intended to prepare you for the lectures and should be read, heard or viewed in advance of the class.

Check WebCT for the current week for links to readings and media.

Jan. 4/6 - Week 1

1. Introduction to the course; India's new place in the world; Scale and cultural variety.
WebCT/Discussions – Survey of Student Interest (Due date: Jan. 10)
2. Indus Valley-Saraswati Civilization.
Readings: Rodrigues – Introduction.
Assignment 1 – 10%. Due Jan. 13.

Jan. 11/13 - Week 2

3. Vedas and Vedic Ritual; *Sruti*.
4. Indus-Aryan Controversy; Contested meanings.
Readings: 1) Rodrigues – Chapter 1 (Vedic Religion)
2) Selections from *Rg Veda*. (WebCT).
3) Selections on understanding *varna, jati* and *gotra*. (WebCT).
4) Selections on contesting the distant past. (WebCT)

Due Jan. 13 - Assignment 1.

Assignment 2 – 10%. Due Jan. 20.

Jan. 18/20 - Week 3

5. *Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Vedangas*.
6. The *Upanisads*.
Readings: 1) Rodrigues – Chapter 2 (*Karma* and cosmology)
2) Selections from the *Upanisads* – (WebCT).

Due Jan. 20 - Assignment 2.

Assignment 3 – 10%. Due Jan. 27.

Jan. 25/27 - Week 4

7. Philosophy: *Smrti*; Six *Darshanas*; Nondualism, Dualism, Theism.
8. *Sramana* influence; *Astika/Nastika*; *Matham* and *Pitham*.
Readings: 1) Rodrigues – Chapter 5 (The Sanskrit Language).
2) Rodrigues – Chapter 6 (Indian Philosophical Schools).
3) Rodrigues – Chapter 12 (*Vedanta*).

Due Jan. 27 - Assignment 3.

Feb.1/3 - Week 5

9. *Varna-Asrama-Dharma*; Duty and liberation.
10. Asceticism; *Vratas*; Living a “good life”.
Readings: 1) Rodrigues – Chapter 3 (Hindu social organization and values).
2) Rodrigues – Chapter 4 (*Dharma* and the individual).
3) Selections from *Manavadharmasastra*. (WebCT).
4) Selections on various *dharmas*. (WebCT).

Assignment 4 – 10%. Due Feb. 10.

Feb 8/10 - Week 6

11. *Itihasa: Ramayana.*

12. Many *Ramayanas.*

- Readings: 1) Rodrigues – Chapter 7 (The Epics)
2) Selections on variant versions of the *Ramayana.* (WebCT).
3) Johnson – *The Bhagavad Gita* (all).

Due Feb. 10 - Assignment 4.

* Feb 14-20 - Reading Break *

Feb. 22/24 - Week 7

13. *Itihasa: Mahabharata.*

- Readings: 1) Selections from the *Mahabharata.* (WebCT).

14. *Bhagavad Gita.*

- Readings: 1) Rodrigues – Chapter 8 (The *Bhagavad Gita* and the rise of *bhakti*).
2) Selections on responses to the message of the *Gita.* (WebCT).

Assignment 5 – 10%. Due Mar. 3.

Mar. 1/3 - Week 8

15. Roots of *bhakti*; *Cankam* tradition; *Alvar*, *Nayanmar* and Tamil theism.

16. Spread of *bhakti* across languages and cultures.

- Readings: 1) Rodrigues – Chapter 9 (Major Hindu theistic sects).
2) Rodrigues – Chapter 10 (Hindu deities and Puranic mythology).
3) Selections on *bhakti.* (WebCT).

Due Mar. 3 - Assignment 5.

Mar. 8/10 - Week 9

Mar. 8 Research Abstract Due

17. Temple ritual; Festival; Officials; *Murti*; Sacred space and time.

18. Cosmogony; *Sthalam*; *Tirtham*; *Yatra* (pilgrimage).

- Readings: 1) Rodrigues – Chapter 11 (Hindu art and worship rituals).
2) Selections from the *Puranas.* (WebCT).
3) Selections on the *yugas*, temple, festival and pilgrimage.
(WebCT).

* Mar 14 – Daylight Saving Time Begins *

Mar. 15/17 - Week 10

19. *Sakti* and the *tantrika* way.

20. Paradigms of gender; Village goddesses and their helpers.

- Readings: 1) Rodrigues – Chapter 13 (*Tantra*).
2) Selections from *Sakta Puranas – Devimahatmya.* (WebCT).
3) Selections on village religion. (WebCT).

Mar. 22/24 - Week 11

21. Muslim and European impacts; 19th Century reform movements.

Due Mar. 22 - Research Paper (20%)

22. 20th Century reformers; Independence, Partition, Separatism.

- Readings: 1) Rodrigues – Chapter 14 (Reform and revitalization).
2) Selections from Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Savarkar, M. K. Gandhi. (WebCT).

Mar 29/31 - Week 12

23. Indigeneity; Inclusion, exclusion; Minorities, *Dalits*, *Adivasis*; Ambedkar and conversion; “Caste” politics; Negotiating *jati* status.
24. Hindu horizons.
- Readings: 1) Rodrigues – Chapter 15 (Hinduism beyond India)
2) Rodrigues – Chapter 16 (Hinduism and the West)
3) Selected readings to be assigned. (WebCT).

NOTES ON EVALUATION:

There are no grade-raising exams or alternative assignments in this course. If you miss an assignment due date unavoidably, you must provide adequate written documentation (e.g. a doctor’s note, an obituary) for your incapacity. A timely resolution will have to be negotiated with the instructor to meet the criteria of good standing should a student wish to be eligible to write a deferred final exam.

Please see “REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES” attached to the Course Outline for policy on plagiarism, the grading system, academic accommodation and petitions to defer. The University’s policies on Academic Integrity and Offences apply in the writing of all tests and research assignments.

* * *

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 range from a mark of zero for the plagiarized work to a final grade of “F” for the course, and even suspension from all studies or expulsion from the University.

GRADING SYSTEM

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

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

F	Failure. No academic credit
WDN	Withdrawn from the course
ABS	Absent from the final examination
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 November 16, 2009. The last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter (full year) and Winter term courses is March 12, 2010.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: 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. For more details visit the Equity Services website: http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

Religious obligation: 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. For more details visit the Equity Services website: http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

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 are 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 I receive 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: http://www.carleton.ca/pmc/students/acad_accom.html

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>

PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to complete a **final** term paper or write a **final** examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control or whose performance on an examination has been impaired by such circumstances may apply in writing within five working days to the Registrar's Office for permission to extend a term paper deadline or to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully and specifically supported by a medical certificate or other relevant documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Classics and 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	500 Unicentre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-6632	4 th floor Library
Learning Commons 520-1125	4 th floor Library