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**Hindu  
Religious Perspectives  
RS 30513  
Fall 2016**

Office Hours  
M-F 11-11:45 or  
by appointment  
personal.tcu.edu/afort

**Course Description:** This course will introduce the diverse strands of Hindu religious traditions. One major task is to trace "Hinduism" through its various manifestations: Vedic, brahmanical, ascetic, devotional, Tantric, and modern. A second goal is to examine the boundaries of our own worldviews by reflecting on what "religion" means in the Hindu context. Our study will illumine continuity and change in the Hindu tradition, and Indian culture more generally, from the ancient and classical to the modern periods. By introducing another worldview in some depth, this course offers the opportunity for us to reflect on our own. Our exploration will, of course, use the concepts and modes of inquiry common in the academic study of religion.

**Outcomes:** Through two exams, three short (c. 1000 word) papers, eCollege journal entries, as well as class participation, you will be assessed on your ability:

To recognize Hindu religious traditions and their diversity of thought and practice.

To investigate and analyze continuity and change in the Hindu tradition, and Indian culture more generally, from the ancient and classical to the modern periods.

To reflect on what "religion" means in the Hindu context using the lenses provided by the discipline of religious studies.

To identify and articulate the value of understanding another worldview ("mental migration"), and by so doing, take the opportunity to reflect on your own.

To read critically, think analytically, speak persuasively, and write effectively through the description, analysis and evaluation of an array of ideas, themes and issues in Indian religious history.

**Expectations:** You are expected to attend all classes (come on time, but come even if late), and to read (and think about) the assignments before class. Both are necessary for full understanding; they also help you to get a good grade. If you miss four or more classes, your grade can be lowered automatically unless you have a legitimate and documented excuse. Bring the relevant books to class; we will analyze the readings. We will also occasionally view slides and videos. Be ready to listen, think, question, and speak. All topics are open, but civil and respectful discourse is required.

**Assignments:** There will be three short (c. 4 pg. or 1000 word) papers (worth 15% of grade each) and two exams (worth 20% each) which will include both objective and essay questions. Each of these should demonstrate your

knowledge of the material; they will also provide an opportunity to share more personal responses. Unless you contact me beforehand, late papers or exam absence will be permitted only for officially excused absences. You are also required to make a weekly entry into a computer journal on eCollege; it is mandatory but individual entries are ungraded. **The journal, attendance and class participation are worth 15% of your grade.** I will assess both the quantity and quality of these course elements.

A=always present, contributed often (in class and journal) thoughtfully and intelligently; consistently assumed responsibility for keeping discussion going; B= almost always present, contributed mostly thoughtfully and intelligently; aided in keeping discussion moving but did not always assume responsibility; C= usually present, contributed sporadically without taking much responsibility; D=missed a number of classes, contributed occasionally; did not take ownership of class discussion.

**You are also expected to visit at least one of the nearby Hindu temples by the November 1.** You may go alone or with a group. Please write a 2 page reaction paper about your experience. Here is some basic information about two: our local temple is <http://fortworthhindutemple.org/>, 3000 Longvue Ave. FW 76108, 817-292-4444. Also good is Kalachandji's Palace, 5430 Gurley Ave., Dallas 75223. Phone: 214-827-6330. Both a full fledged temple (to Krishna) and a restaurant. <http://www.radhakalachandji.com>.

**Grades: A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=below 60. I use +/-, and use the following grade scale: .0-.3=grade minus, .31-.74=grade, .75-.99=grade plus**  
**You may check in with me about your course standing at any time.**

If you have a problem affecting your course participation, or must miss class, let me know. Also, if you have a disability which may affect your class performance, please inform me during the first week of class. Here are some policy statements:

*Disability Statement approved Fall 2007 by the Undergraduate Council / Revised Summer 2011:* Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 1010. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-6567.

Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations and accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations. Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator. Guidelines for documentation may be found at [http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability\\_documentation.asp](http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_documentation.asp).

Students with emergency medical information or needing special arrangements in case a building must be evacuated should discuss this information with their instructor/professor as soon as possible.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Academic Misconduct (Sec. 3.4 from the Student Handbook) –Any act, such as cheating or plagiarism, that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life and are listed in detail in the Undergraduate Catalog (Student Policies>Academic Conduct Policy Details; [http://www.catalog.tcu.edu/current\\_year/undergraduate/](http://www.catalog.tcu.edu/current_year/undergraduate/)).

Finally, feel free to see me after class or in my office.

### **RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS**

Campus Life (257-7926, Sadler Hall 2006); TCU Library (257-7117); Center for Academic Services (257-7486, Sadler Hall 1022); Writing Center (257-7221, Reed 419); Student Development Services (257-7855, BLUU 2003); Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (257-7830, Jarvis Hall), and Counseling, Testing, and Mental Health Center (257-7863, Brown Lupton Health Center).

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

*Hinduism: A Beginner's Guide*, Klaus Klostermaier ("Intro" below)  
*The Life of Hinduism*, J. S. Hawley and V. Narayanan ("Life" below)  
*The Hindu Tradition*, A. Embree ("Embree" below)  
plus readings in Doc Sharing in eCollege/Learning Studio

### **DAILY CLASS ASSIGNMENTS (to be read for the day listed)**

23 Aug. Introduction to course    Life: 10-16    Intro: 1-4  
25 Aug. Seeing India    Life: 33-52    Intro: 7-17  
30 Aug. Veda    Embree: 3-29, 36-43    Intro: 18-22, 25-26, 30-31, 42-44  
1 Sept. Vedanta/Upaniṣads    Embree: 48-65    Intro: 103-13  
6 Sept. Asceticism and Varṇāśrama-dharma    Intro: 22-25, 114-16    Embree: 189, 74-98  
8 Sept. Varṇāśrama-dharma    Intro: 32-41, 44-47    Life: 76-87  
13 Sept. Strī-dharma    Embree: 98-100    Life: 63-75, 218-27  
15 Sept. Epics (esp. Rāmāyaṇa)    Intro: 58-63, 67-73

**PAPER DUE** (topic: If a friend asked you "what is Hinduism?" and "what makes it a religion?," what would you answer? Focus on key elements and definitions.)

20 Sept. Rāmāyana and gods Life: 115-21, 124-36 Embree: 117-19, 164-7, 174-6

22 Sept. Bhagavad Gītā Intro: 63-66 Thompson (**Reading 1** in Doc Sharing)

27 Sept. Purāṇa/Pūjā Embree: 208-23 Intro: 53-58, 73-75

Visit <http://huntingtonarchive.osu.edu/Exhibitions/meetingGodExhibit.php>

View at least three sections and write a one page reaction paper

29 Sept. Kṛṣṇa Gopāla Embree: 168-70 Life: 53-59, 99-111

Rādhā/Kṛṣṇa poetry reading (**Reading 2**)

4 Oct. Śaivism/Tantra Intro: 79-89 Embree: 232-45 (slide show of deities)

6 Oct. Goddess/Śāktas Dūrga/Kāli reading (**Reading 3**) Intro: 91-99 Life: 158-68

11 Oct. **Fall break** (remember temple visit!)

13 Oct. **EXAMINATION**

18 Oct. Yoga Intro: 114-22 Embree: 194-97

20 Oct. Advaita Vedanta Intro: 112, 125-34 Embree: 197-99

Deutsch reading (**Reading 4**)

25 Oct. theistic Vedanta Intro: 135-45, 75-78 Embree: 205-07, 245-56

27 Oct. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism and the Hare Krishnas Intro: 183-86

chapter from *Coming Back* (**Reading 5**)

1 Nov. discuss paper and temple visits video: West Meets East (James Mallinson)

**PAPER DUE** (topic: consider two different strands of the Hindu tradition which we have discussed since the exam. How are they continuous with, and different from, earlier "Hinduism?" What does each hold is most important, what do *you* think is most important in them, and what do they teach you about your own worldview?)

3 Nov. Muslims/British Intro: 149-55, 165-69 Embree: 273-84, 292-98, 304-13

Life: 266-70

8 Nov. visit from Pravrajika Brahmaprana and Swami Sarvapriyananda, Vedanta Society

10 Nov. "Neo-Hinduism" Intro: 155-64 Embree: 299-324 (ex. 304-13), 339-43

Ramakrishna reading (**Reading 6**)

15 Nov. modern Hinduism, pilgrimage Intro: 177-83, 188-91 Life: 173-83

Ramana reading (**Reading 7**) Embree: 325-48 (ex. 339-43)

17 Nov. Contemporary Hinduism (Hindutva) Intro: 169-75, 195-98 Life: 257-65

22 Nov. Hinduism in America and the world Life: 231-53

extra credit for viewing video *Kumare* with 1-2 page reaction by Dec. 6

29 Nov. guest professor: Vasudha Narayanan

**PAPER DUE** (topic: identify three significant elements of Hinduism since the British arrived, and how are they continuous and how different from pre-modern Hinduism?)

1 Dec. Contested Hinduism today Life: 271-99 Fort reading (reading 8)

6 Dec. Looking back and looking forward Life: 140-53

Discussion: What is Hinduism today, and how is it a “religion?”

**FINAL EXAMINATION** Tuesday Dec. 13 11:30 a.m.

## PAPER WRITING SUGGESTIONS

Papers should be typed and double-spaced (with a common font). A clean-looking paper will help you. Proper spelling and grammar are important, and will affect your grade.

Your paper should answer the questions posed on the syllabus, using the lectures and readings which address the specified topic. Set aside some time to think about the paper *before* you write. Make notes of your thoughts. Review the assigned material and look for passages related to the points you want to make. Construct an outline. Do some self-investigation. Why do you have the perspective you do? After writing a first draft, check to see if you clearly state, then address, the key points or issue(s), and if your paper has an introduction and conclusion.

I am looking for clear self-expression and increased self-understanding in addition to understanding and critical analysis of textual material.

You may rewrite, and at times I will encourage you to rewrite. Remember that there is a library nearby, and if needed, you can consult with me about research resources. If you refer to or quote course books, page numbers may be put in parentheses after references. We also have an excellent Writing Center (Reed 419, 257-7221), if you need help.

Your paper will be graded on:

- 1) form (presentation, grammar, spelling, punctuation).
- 2) clarity of focus, organization, and expression.
- 3) comprehension and utilization of course material.
- 4) critical reflection and personal insight.