

UC 11485 11F

CBM003 ADD/CHANGE FORM

APPROVED DEC 7 2011

Undergraduate Council *Core Code 81* or

New Course  Course Change

Core Category: WI-ID Effective Fall 2012

Graduate/Professional Studies Council

New Course  Course Change

Effective Fall 2012

1. Department: RELS College: CLASS
2. Faculty Contact Person: Lynn Mitchell Telephone: 3-3213 Email: lemitchell@uh.edu
3. Course Information on New/Revised course:
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
RELS / 2340 / Introduction to Hinduism
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.)  
RELS / 2340 / INTRODUCTION TO HINDUISM
  - SCH: 3.00 Level: SO CIP Code: 38.0204.00 Lect Hrs: 3 Lab Hrs: 0

RECEIVED OCT 14 2011

4. Justification for adding/changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements
5. Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course?  Yes  No  
If Yes, please complete:
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_
  - Course ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Effective Date (currently active row): \_\_\_\_\_

6. Authorized Degree Program(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department?  Yes  No
  - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments?  Yes  No
  - Can the course be repeated for credit?  Yes  No (if yes, include in course description)

7. Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C ...) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)

8. If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title  
RELS / 3390 / Hinduism and Jainism
  - Course ID: 045201 Effective Date (currently active row): 8252008

9. Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)  
Cr: 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: ENGL 1304 or ENGL 1310. Description (30 words max.): Historical and conceptual introduction to Hinduism: ancient and classical forms in addition to their modern manifestations, including the forms these traditions take in the United States.

10. Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 10/13/11  
Print/Type Name: Sarah Fishman

U N I V E R S I T Y *of* H O U S T O N  
CORE CURRICULUM REQUEST FOR COURSES NEW TO THE CORE

Originating Department/College: CLASS/ Religious Studies Program

Person making request: Lynn Mitchell Telephone: 3-3213

E-mail: lemitchell@uh.edu

Dean's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 10/13/11

**I. General Information:**

**Course number and title:** RELS 2340 Introduction to Hinduism

**Catalog description** must be included on completed CBM 003 form and attached to this document.

**Category of Core** for which course is being proposed (mark only one):

- Communication
- Mathematics
- Mathematics/Reasoning (IDO)
- American History
- Government
- Humanities
- Visual/Performing Arts Critical
- Visual/Performing Arts Experiential
- Natural Sciences
- Social/Behavioral Sciences
- Writing in the Disciplines (IDO)

**II. Objectives and Evaluation (respond on one or more separate sheets):**

**Call ext. 3-0919 for a copy of "Guidelines for Requesting and Evaluating Core Courses" or visit the website at [www.uh.edu/academics/corecurriculum](http://www.uh.edu/academics/corecurriculum)**

- A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see **Guidelines**). Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.
- B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.
- C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course.

**SVP. Effective 8/23/10. Replaces all previous forms, which may no longer be used.**

- A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see **Guidelines**). Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.
- Students will have an understanding of the study of religion as an interdisciplinary academic field.
  - Students will develop understanding of Hindu and Jain practices through critical analysis of the sacred texts.
  - Students will further their understanding of the religions by focusing further writing on ethnographic study and historical analysis.
  - Writing produced throughout the course will be developed through an instructor and university writing resource services feedback process involving discussion of invention, assistance with organization, opportunity for draft revisions and editing, and finally presentation of writings via class group and/or instructor discussion.
- B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.
- Use of evidence, experience, critical reason, and coherent argumentation will be the standards upon which all of the written work will be graded, and will be modeled and encouraged within the course itself.
  - Instructor evaluations
- C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course
- Evaluation of papers and of final essays will serve to refine the selection of readings and amount of time spent in certain formative areas of the course.
  - Instructor evaluations will serve to refine presentation style to increase the correlation between the course goals and the methods for achieving the goals.

## **RELS 2340 Introduction to Hinduism**

Lecturer: Dr. Michele Verma

Office: Religious Studies, A.D. Bruce Religion Centre

Office Hours: Following class and by appointment

Email: [mmverma@uh.edu](mailto:mmverma@uh.edu)

### **Course Synopsis**

This class is an introduction to some of the diverse practices encompassed by term “Hinduism”; the interlinked elements of scripture/ sacred texts, spirituality, aesthetics, history, religious community, ritual, philosophy, society and culture. While we will be reading some scripture, the *Bhagavad-gita* and excerpts from the *Ramayana*, the emphasis in this course will be on the study of lived tradition or practice in Hinduism.

### **Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will have an understanding of the study of religion as an interdisciplinary academic field.
2. Students will develop understanding of Hindu practices through critical analysis of the sacred texts.
3. Students will further their understanding of the religions by focusing further writing on ethnographic study and historical analysis.
4. Writing produced throughout the course will be developed through an instructor and university writing resource services feedback process involving discussion of invention, assistance with organization, opportunity for draft revisions and editing, and finally presentation of writings via class group and/or instructor discussion.

### **Writing In the Disciplines**

This is writing-intensive content course which fulfills a CORE requirement for a Writing in the Disciplines course (WID) and it can be counted towards minor requirements. As such, its educational objectives include:

- Read published articles informed by religious studies in order to gain knowledge of discipline specific debates and ways of writing.
- Demonstrate through your writing familiarity with key concepts and arguments developed by scholars of religion and use them to develop your own analyses and arguments through complex reasoning and critical thinking.
- Develop writing skills specific to religious studies by working through all stages of the writing process including: invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, and presentation.
- Prepare a research paper with documentation in accordance with disciplinary standards.
- Clearly communicate your ideas in writing with organization and technical proficiency.

### **Grading**

Midterm exam 25%

Quizzes 25%

Final 3000-word paper 25%

Participation Grade 25%

Your participation grade is based on your attendance, promptness and class discussion/presentations.

A missed class without prior permission from instructor = 10% deduction

Please do not come late to class. If you are tardy more than 10 minutes = 5% deduction

Three times late to class equal a missed class = 10% deduction

## Writing Assignment

Religious studies is a deeply interdisciplinary field. Writing projects will require use of theories and methods drawn from many other departments, programs, and curricula of study. Various modes of investigation are possible—literary, historical, cultural, sociological, anthropological, etc. One significant aspect of these approaches is their tendency to contextualize religious phenomena (beliefs, rituals, etc). Every religion arises within a particular environment, which inevitably affects the development of the religion. When you explore a religion's context, seemingly mystifying aspects of the tradition often become more comprehensible (source: [http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/religious\\_studies.html](http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/religious_studies.html)).

### **Tips for Writing the Religion Paper**

- Consider your sources.  
When reading for Religion - especially when reading sources found on the Web - note whether you are using materials from experts in the practice of religion (gurus, theologians, priests, nuns), or respected scholars, employed by reputable universities. While both sources might be useful to your research, it's important to understand the source, its purpose, and its intended audience.
- Consider the current conversation.  
Consulting recent editions of new work by living scholars is a good way to determine which arguments are current and salient.
- Read footnotes and endnotes.  
Often footnotes and endnotes will lead you to other sources. Moreover, good scholarly editions of religious texts have substantive footnotes that will help you to better understand the passages you are working with.
- Consider your audience.  
If you are writing for readers who are not experts in the field, be sure to acquaint them with all relevant background material. Always write clearly and concisely, so that your paper is a pleasure to read.
- Don't let quotations speak for themselves.  
In religion, passages taken out of context can be misread. Also, because so much dispute exists over meaning, you need to make sure that you explain to your reader what a passage means in terms of your argument, and why it is relevant. As in all papers, you need to provide background for passages *before* quoting them, and you need to analyze the passage *after*.
- Remember: religious texts require special citation methods.  
When citing the *Bible*, for instance, you need to cite Book, Chapter, and Verse. Familiarize yourself with the appropriate citation methods.  
Source: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/student/humanities/religion.shtml>

### **Final Paper:**

There is one 3000-word writing assignment. You may pick a topic related to the course that interests you. However, you must email me your proposed topic before you start working on your paper. This assignment will be graded very strictly. To receive an A papers should be:

- at least 3000 words (normal 12 pt. font)
- properly referenced and include a bibliography
- carefully and clearly written
  - include transition sentences
  - include a clear and stated thesis or argument
  - include a discussion of that thesis or argument
  - include footnoted evidence from readings and other sources that support the paper's thesis and argument
  - include an introduction and conclusion
  - use proper grammar and spelling (spell- and grammar- check on computers makes this much easier now).
- This paper also must demonstrate through incorporation of one or more writing style (Comparative essays, Critical readings of religious texts, Ethnographic studies, Historical analyses) that you understand how your topic fits within the historical development and branches of Hinduism: its relationship to the Hindu context. If this part of the paper is missing, the highest grade you will be able to earn is a 'C'.
- Rubric
  - Identified and related significant ideas (20 points) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Good discussion of ideas (20 points) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Insightful and reflective (20 points) \_\_\_\_\_

Well-written with few to no errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar (20 points) \_\_\_\_\_  
Followed syllabus instructions (20 points) \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Required Texts**

- Eck, Diana L. *Darśan: seeing the divine image in India*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.
- Miller, Barbara Stoler, Trans. *The Bhagavad-gita: Krishna's counsel in the time of war*. New York: Bantam Books, 1991.
- Whaling, Frank. *Understanding Hinduism*. Edinburgh: Dunedin Academic Press Ltd, 2010.
- **In addition to three required books, selected chapters from the following books will be on reserve at the UH library and/or available through Blackboard:**
  - Fowler, Jeaneane. *Hinduism: Beliefs and Practices*. Eastbourne: Sussex Academic Press, 1997.
  - Hawley, John Stratton and Vasudha Narayanan, Eds. *The Life of Hinduism*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.
  - Narayanan, Vasudha. *Hinduism: Origins - Beliefs - Practices - Holy Texts - Sacred Places*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
  - Klostermaier, Klaus K. *A Survey of Hinduism*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007.
  - Richman, Paula. *Many Rāmāyaṇas: the diversity of a narrative tradition in South Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.
  - Sharma, Arvind. *Modern Hindu thought: an introduction*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2005.

### **Schedule of Readings**

#### ***Week 1: Introduction***

Whaling, "Introduction" (1-14) -14 pages

#### ***Week 2: History and Society***

Whaling, "The History of the Hindu Tradition" (14-37) - 23 pages

Whaling, "Social and Political Life" (73-94) - 20 pages

#### ***Week 3: Deities and Images of the Sacred***

Whaling, "Transcendence and the Gods" (37-47) - 10 pages

Eck, "Seeing the Sacred" (3-22) -19 pages

\*Quiz I

#### ***Week 4: Major Traditions of Worship***

Whaling "Hindu Religious Traditions" (57-73) -16 pages

Eck, "The Nature of Hindu Images" (32-55) - 23 pages

#### ***Week 5: Temple and Pilgrimage***

Eck, "Image, Temple and Pilgrimage" (59-77) - 18 pages

Whaling, "Hindu Aesthetics"(117-135) - 18 pages

Whaling, "Diaspora" (151-152) -2 pages

\*Visit to a temple

#### ***Week 6: Life Cycle and Calendar***

Narayanan, "Sacred Time" -11 pages

Fowler, "Asramadharmā" - 3 pages

Fowler, "Life Cycles in the Hindu Family" - 8 pages

Fowler, "Hindu Festivities" -5 pages

#### ***Week 7: Scripture and Philosophy***

Whaling, "Scripture and Sacred Texts" (100-117) - 17 pages

Whaling, "Hindu Concepts, Philosophy and the modern World" (145-151) -6 pages  
\*Midterm Exam

**Week 8: The Mahabharata**

Jean-Claude Carrier, Summary of the Mahabharata (handout) - 5 pages  
*The Bhagavad-gita* (ix-xxii) - 13 pages without annotations  
*The Bhagavad-gita*, Ch. 1-3 - 15 pages without annotations

**Week 9: The Bhagavad-gita**

*The Bhagavad-gita*, Ch 4-11 - 32.5 pages without annotations

**Week 10: Key Concepts in Hinduism and Jainism**

Sharma, "Samsara," "Karma," "Dharma," "Maya," "Moksha" (75-116) - 41 pages  
*Reading on Jainism to be announced and put on reserve and/or Blackboard.*

**Week 11: Yoga and Jainism**

Whaling, "Hindu Spirituality" (135-145) - 10 pages  
\*Quiz II

**Week 12: Ramayana - Part II**

Richman, "Introduction: The Diversity of the Ramayana Tradition" (1-21) - 21 pages

**Week 13: Ramayana - Part I**

Lutgendorf, "A Ramayana on Air" in *The Life of Hinduism* (140-157) - 13 pages  
Whaling, "Dharma and Ethics" (94-100) - 6 pages  
\*Quiz III

**Week 14: Gurus, Saints and Avatars**

Narayanan, "Sacred Persons" - 7 pages  
Hallstrom, "Anandamayi Ma" in *Life of Hinduism* (173-183) -10 pages

**Week 15 Hindu Reformers**

Klostermaier, "Hindu Reforms and Reformers" (410-428) – 18 pages  
Klostermaier, "Mahatma Gandhi" (429-440) - 30 pages  
\*Final five to seven page paper

*\*I reserve the right to alter the syllabus as I deem appropriate. However, I will not change the grading or requirements.*

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

The University of Houston is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for eligible students with disabilities, including students who have learning disabilities, health impairments, psychiatric disabilities, and/or other disabilities.

Students who have disabilities are encouraged to register with the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD), Justin Dart, Jr. Center for Students with Disabilities (713-743-5400-voice, 713-749-1527- TTY) as early as possible in their academic careers. Specific documentation from qualified health care providers will be required.

Documentation requirements for disability eligibility may be obtained by contacting CSD or by downloading this information from the CSD web site at [www.uh.edu/csd](http://www.uh.edu/csd).

Students whose disabilities may require some type of accommodations, including course load modification, exam modification, or other accommodations should contact CSD and discuss the availability of services such as readers, interpreters, or note-takers and the process for requesting accommodations. CSD will recommend accommodations as early as possible each semester. Appropriate accommodations are determined on an individual basis through a team approach involving CSD, the student, the Academic

Accommodations Evaluation Committee, and at times instructors, as appropriate. A student who believes that an instructor has unfairly denied an accommodation request may appeal to the chair of the department, the Dean of the college, and the Provost, in that order.

Services are provided to student athletes who have disabilities at the Athletics/Alumni Center, in addition to the main CSD Office. CSD staff may be reached at the Athletics Department at 713-743-9254.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) conducts psychological and learning disability assessments. There may be a waiting list and/or a charge for these services. CAPS is located in the Student Service Center, Room 226, 713-743-5454.

The University of Houston strives to maintain an accessible campus for students with disabilities via ramps, curb cuts, free inner-campus accessible parking, Braille signs, TTYs, etc. Attendant Care Services are available through the University Health Center by calling 713-743-5112.

Students who identify barrier problems should bring those to the attention of the Section 04/ADA Coordinator at the Office of Affirmative Action at 713-743-8835, and/or CSD.