



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF ART HISTORY, CLASSICS AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Te Kura Toirangi

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RELI 205 THE RELIGIONS OF INDIA: GODS, GODDESSES AND THE SACRED

20 POINTS

TRIMESTER 1 2016

Key dates

Trimester dates: 29 February to 29 June 2016

Teaching dates: 29 February to 5 June 2016

Easter break: 24–30 March 2016

Mid-trimester break: 25 April to 1 May 2016

Study period: 6–9 June 2016

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, it may instead be possible to apply for an aegrotat (refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

Class times and locations

Lectures: Friday 10:00 – 11:50 HU 119

Tutorials: tba

Names and contact details

Course Coordinator: Dr Rick Weiss KP 14 205 rick.weiss@vuw.ac.nz 463 6726

Administrator: Aliko Kalliabetsos KP 14 / 203 aliko.kalliabetsos@vuw.ac.nz 463 5299

Communication of additional information

Religious Studies is located at 14 Kelburn Parade. The programme administrator, Aiki Kalliabetos, is in room 203. Notices regarding the course or any information on changes will be posted on the notice board outside her office. Notices will also be communicated to students via emails sent from Blackboard. Students who do not use their assigned student.vuw.ac.nz email addresses should ensure that ITS has an up-to-date email address, and that they check this address regularly.

Prescription

This course will investigate the religious traditions of India, particularly Hinduism but with reference to Buddhism and Jainism, maintaining a strong emphasis on contemporary India against a backdrop of history. We will analyse the complexity of religious practices, myth, and doctrines of India, using the scholarly methods of religious studies.

Course content

The course will investigate major themes in the religious traditions originating in India, particularly Hinduism. Our focus will be on contemporary India against a detailed backdrop of history. We will engage primary and secondary materials on a variety of subjects: sacrifice, worship, narratives, gender, social hierarchy, and politics, to name a few. The course will introduce students to the complexity and diversity of religious practices, myths, and doctrines of the region, which we will analyse using the scholarly methods of religious studies.

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. demonstrate knowledge of the content of Indian religious traditions, important for developing 'religious literacy' in our globalising world.
2. communicate interpretations of primary data – historical, textual, ethnographic, etc. – that demonstrate an understanding of, and sensitivity towards, complex religious contexts and traditions.
3. evaluate scholarly arguments about Indian religions, advancing a critical, independent perspective.
4. demonstrate skills in research and in the presentation of findings.

Teaching format

This course is delivered through a combination of lectures and tutorials. **The lecture programme** is described in the "Appendix to the Course Outline." Lectures may be changed from time to time. As much notice as possible will be given when changes occur, and if necessary a revised programme will be issued at lectures.

Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, in order to demonstrate the achievement of all CLOs students must: attend at least 7 out of 9 tutorials.

Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet any of the MCRs because of exceptional personal circumstances, should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

Workload

For 20-point courses a student should, on average, spend 13 hours per week for preparation, reading and writing in addition to attendance at lectures and tutorials. The total workload for the course, including class time, should be approximately 200 hours.

Assessment

Assessment items and workload per item	%	CLO(s)	Due date
One Primary Source Essay of approximately 2,000 words Recommended average time spent on this task: 30 hours	30%	1, 2	13 April, 2016
One Research Essay of approximately 2,000 words Recommended average time spent on this task: 30 hours	30%	1, 2, 3, 4	1 June, 2016
5 tutorial assignments to be handed in at tutorials Recommended average time spent on this task: 40 hours (400 words each)	15%	1, 2, 3	In tutorials throughout the trimester
In-class test (duration: 1 hour 50 minutes) Recommended average time spent on this task: 100 hours	25%	1, 2, 3	3 June, 2016

The assessment of this course relates to these objectives in the following ways:

The tutorial assignments are designed to facilitate student reflection on the required readings. These allow students to build their knowledge of Indian religious traditions, and to develop skills in critical reading and analysis of primary and secondary material.

The essays will encourage students to pursue their own interests in Indian religions through formulating their own research question(s) in an exploration of primary and secondary sources. Through the essays, students will be exposed first-hand to the issues raised in scholarly analysis and will develop the knowledge and the skills necessary to critically evaluate scholarly studies of materials they have studied for themselves.

The class test allows students to demonstrate their grasp of the material covered in the course and their understanding of the themes addressed, and creates an opportunity to review and reflect on what they have learned in the course as a whole.

Submission and return of work

Essays are to be submitted both electronically to Blackboard and also to the essay box situated outside the Religious Studies office, KP 14 / 203. The register must be signed and dated when an essay is submitted. All essays will be submitted to the plagiarism-detection software Turnitin. Marked essays shall be returned two weeks from the date of submission and may be collected from the Religious Studies office.

Extensions and penalties

Extensions

If a student requires an extension for any serious or medical reason they must apply for one as soon as practicably possible before the due date of the assessment in question

Penalties

Penalties for late essays / assignments:

- 2 per cent per 24 hours will be deducted for late essays
- Essays submitted late due to medical reasons must be given to the programme administrator accompanied by a doctor's or other appropriate certification.

Set texts

All of the readings are contained in the Course Reader to be purchased from Vicbooks at a cost of approx \$40.00. Vicbooks website: www.vicbooks.co.nz.

An electronic text which will serve as a useful reference tool is Brill's *Encyclopedia of Hinduism*, available through the library catalogue:

<http://victoria.lconz.ac.nz/vwebv/holdingsInfo?searchId=687&recCount=25&recPointer=0&bibId=1602297>

Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course.

Student feedback

The most recent evaluations for the course were outstanding, and confirmed that the current shape of the course is working well. Students responded that they particularly enjoyed the course's focus on current events. I will continue to integrate current debates in religion in India into the course. One of the highlights of the course has been the visit to the Kilbirnie Hindu temple. I continue to work with the temple priest on the content of the visit.

This course will be evaluated by CAD.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf

- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz